MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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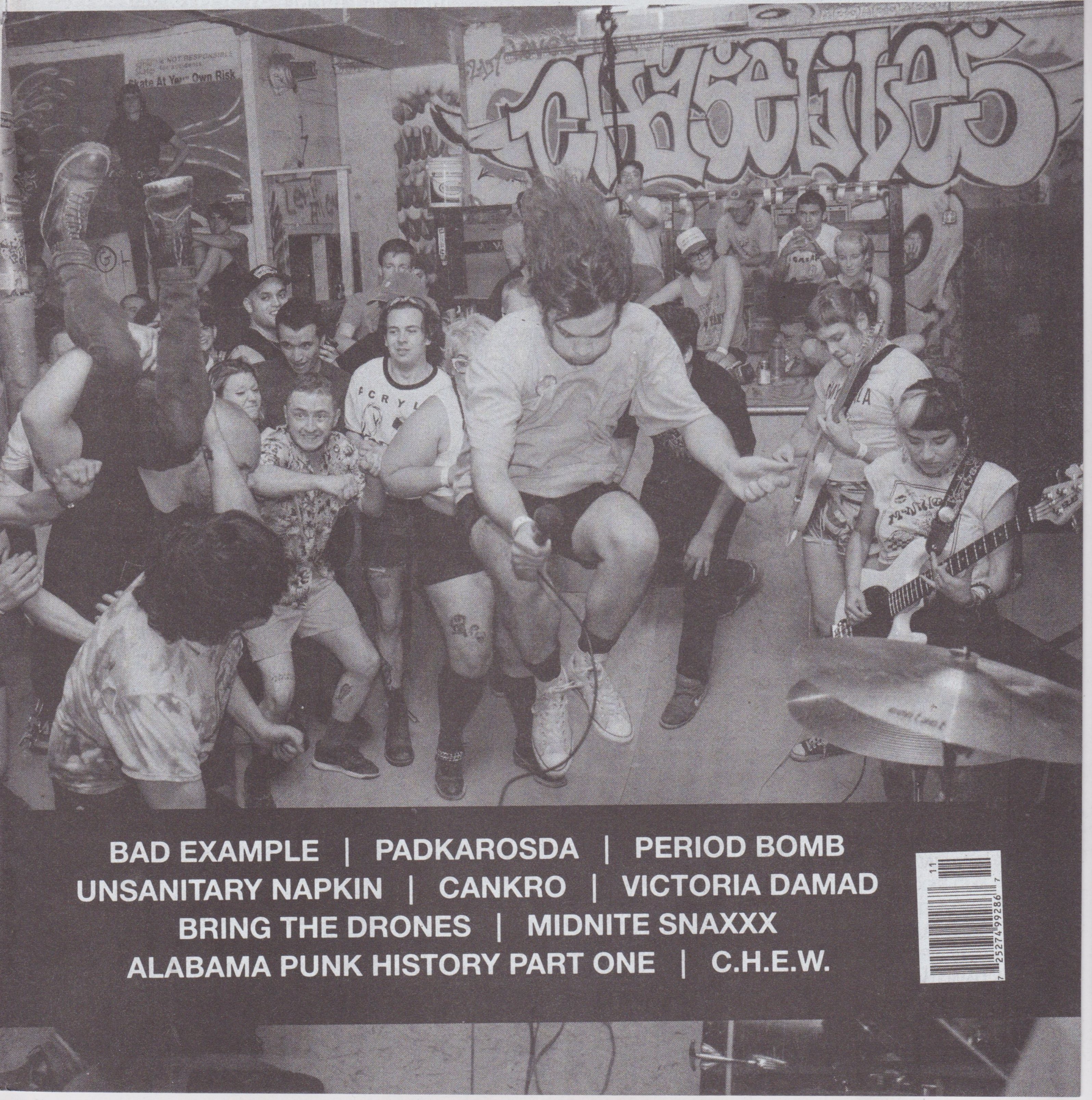

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UNSANITARY NAPKIN | CANKRO | VICTORIA DAMAD
BRING THE DRONES | MIDNITE SNAXXX
ALABAMA PUNK HISTORY PART ONE | C.H.E.W.

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TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

- HOME BLITZ – live
- CHERRY DEATH / DUSK – live
- HOTHEAD – "Snake Song" 45
- DAVID NANCE – "Amethyst" 45
- ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- JUANA BARRAZA – CS
- NOTS –"Cruel Friend / Violence"
- THE ZOOMERS – Exist LP
- RAYS – live

MATT BADENHOP

- DAGGER – It Makes Me Sick EP
- SELKÄSAUNA – Pyromaani… 12"
- EL DEMASIADO – live
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- PRIMER REGIMEN – EP
- ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
- IMPALERS – live
- LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
- JUANA BARRAZA – CS
- DEODORANT – CS

MITCH CARDWELL

- DAVID NANCE – "Amethyst" 45
- ZOOMERS – Exist LP
- ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
- CHEATER SLICKS – LP
- THE GEROS – "Razor Dog" 45
- LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
- MANE – Alpha Female LP
- PREENING – Beeters EP
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- HOME BLITZ – live

ROBERT COLLINS

- FLIPOUTA.A – live
- D.E.R. – live
- DURS COEURS – Dur Dur Dur LP
- NIGHTFALL – Deadly Game EP
- HOARDER – live
- HEXHAMMER – LP
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- RATGHOST – Discography CD
- PRIMER REGIMEN – EP
- RUT – Attraction EP
- CAMPOS DE EXTERMINIO – live

JOAN DETORO

- NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence"
- VITTNA – CS
- HOTHEAD – "Snake Song" 45
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- BIG HEET – Yellow Badge CS
- ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
- LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
- DAVID NANCE – "Amethyst" 45
- PLASMALAB – Love / Life LP
- DAGGER – It Makes Me Sick EP

LAYLA GIBBON

- NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence"
- HOTHEAD – "Snake Song"
- LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
- ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
- DAVID NANCE – "Amethyst" 45
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- CARSICKNESS – 1979–1982 CD
- SUMSHAPES – Cabin Biscuits LP
- WRITHING SQUARES TOO – EP
- THE ZOOMERS – Exist LP

DAN GOETZ

- FRAMTID – live
- LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
- NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence"
- ZYMOTIC – live
- HOTHEAD – "Snake Song" 45
- ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
- WRITHING SQUARES TOO – EP
- CHRISTMAS PETS – "Glow" 45
- DAGGER – It Makes Me Sick EP
- REMEMBERABLES – LP

GREG HARVESTER

DREAMDECAY – live
LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
RVIVR – "The Tide / Shaggy"
DON'T ASK – LP
PREENING – Beeters EP
ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
JUANA BARRAZA – CS
NEUTRALS – CS
RUT – Attraction EP
DEODORANT – CS

RAY LUJAN

BAD MOVES – Shitty Tomorrow EP
THE CHINCHEES – LP
COCKTAILS – Hypochondriac LP
HATERS – Chronic EP
HIGLEY – LP
HONEY JOY – LP
HOTHEAD – "Snake Song" 45
THE LILLINGTONS – Project 313 EP
RVIVR – "The Tide / Shaggy"
DEATH BY UNGA BUNGA – live
THE DARTS / INVSN – live

FRED SCHRUNK

LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
RUT – Attraction EP
RVIVR – "The Tide / Shaggy"
ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
THE GEROS – "Razor Dog" 45
MANE – Alpha Female LP
THE CHINCHEES – LP
DON'T ASK – LP
IRON CHIC – Shitty Rambo EP

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BAD MOVES – Shitty Tomorrow EP
TIN FOIL – Glamorous LP
COCKTAILS – Hypocondriac LP
TODAY'SHITS – Girl or Two LP
HATERS – Chronic EP
ANDY HUMAN – "Refrigerator" 45
NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence"
THE CHINCHEES – LP
THE GEROS – "Razor Dog" 45
SUSHICORNER – Konichiwow LP

MARISSA MAGIC

CITY DRAGON – live
MAYYORS / LAMPS – live
HOME BLITZ – live
PELIGRAS – live
EN KERNAGHAN... – 45
HOTHEAD – "Snake Song" 45
LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
PLASMALAB – Love / Life LP
PREENING – Beeters EP
RASH – Midnight Crooner EP

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This is a contributor-driven magazine. We need help writing reviews, editing, doing layouts, processing mail, maintaining our archive, and more.

Wanna be a shitworker?
Write mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.

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NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence"
DAVID NANCE – "Amethyst" 45
MANE – Alpha Female LP
EN KERNAGHAN... – 45
THE GEROS – "Razor Dog" 45
TROTS – LP
DION LUNADON – LP
COCKTAILS – Hypocondriac LP
CHEATER SLICKS – LP
SITES N' SOUNDS – 45
ZOOMERS – Exist LP

ROTTEN RON READY

THE GEROS – "Razor Dog" 45
DAGGER – It Makes Me Sick EP
CHRISTMAS PETS – "Glow" 45
SONIC ORDER – Chokehold EP
PRIMER REGIMEN – EP
ANTI-SEX – Un Mejor Futuro LP
LIMP WRIST – Facades LP
BESTHÖVEN / B.E.T.O.E. – split EP
BANSHEE – Caw! LP
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ISSUE #414

Victoria Damad by Chris Boarts Larson.

We're looking for a distribution coordinator! Do you have the patience to deal with the USPS? The persistence to chase down money from forgetful punks? A love of spreadsheets and desire to spread inky thumbprints around the world? Get in touch.

FRONT COVER: Bad Example at DUMB FE5T in Springfield, IL, photo by Veronica Mullen.

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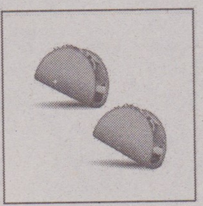

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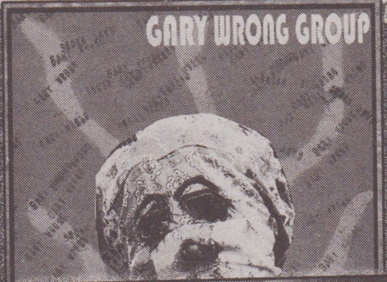

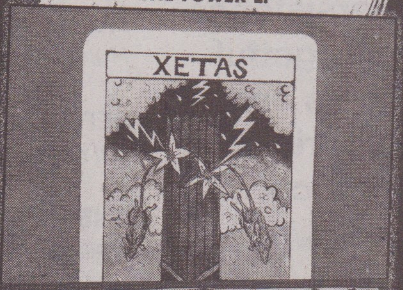

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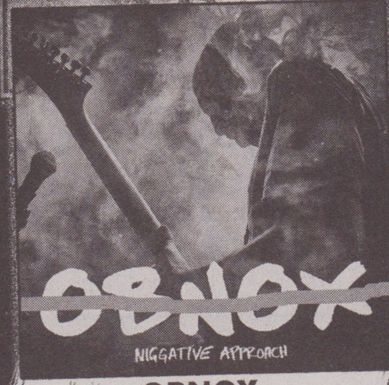

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COLUMNS

SEX WORK IS REAL WORK

Queenie Bon Bon is a current sex worker and political comedic writer and sexological body worker who has worked in strip clubs, massage parlours and brothels over Australia as well as in the UK, and is a member of Debbie Doesn't Do It For Free, the Australian sex worker art collective. This is part two of four.

I'm travelling back from Sydney to Melbourne after living in a brothel for a week. I am purchasing a mascara, and I am having dialogue with the counter girl, which is not uncommon. She wants to know if I've just been "on holiday" and I tell her that, no, I've been working and, after she inquires further, reveal that my work is sex work. She asks me multiple times if this is true ("really?") while I repeatedly request my one waterproof mascara.

She obviously feels that seeing as we have got to know each other, like, really know each other, in a way that feels safe and loving, she feels it is appropriate to ask another question. "Woah," she says. "So like, what's the weirdest sex thing you have ever done?"

I want to tell her a truth, a real truth, because we are real friends now. So I tell her how I have done a lot of weird stuff, like a *lot* of weird, *weird*, stuff, like "stuff I didn't even know was a thing" weird, and she's like, "Yeah I bet you have done a lot of weird stuff, but what's the weirdest thing?" So, I tell her. "Well, I had really bad, like totally disconnected 'no one is enjoying this sex' in a relationship for years and never mentioned it." She looks at me. "No, like, *really* weird." My response to that is "Umm if you don't think that's really weird, you're an absolute freak. I just actually haven't done *anything* weirder than that."

When I leave, I wonder if she thinks I bought waterproof mascara because I'm a hooker, and she thinks hookers are sad and cry a lot. It's actually just because I love doing cum-on-face bookings.

With my new mascara I return to Melbourne and to the sexual sanctuary that is the illegal parlour where I work. In my job, my body is not the criminal element, although with my body I have done some crimes. A thing about this illegal parlour is that, because they were already being heaps, illegal, they would just add on other illegal stuff, for example, not having a receptionist. We just answer the phone ourselves. It's nice. Welcome to the erotic day spa. Your wellness is important to us. I worked at this parlour for really quite some time. It was very rare that we would meet the owner, who had the communication style of a passive aggressive housemate. Everything was negotiated through notes, from how much we got paid to what we did in sessions, how we managed the kitchen area or made up the yucky massage gel. One area she had really a lot of feelings about was how her dutiful staff were to coordinate the towels. There was something about her relationship to the towels that really did something to my self-control. One simply cannot employ people who you think are adult enough to have sex for money in your illegal brothel and yet doubt that they are capable of successfully folding towels.

We had two towel areas, one for "good" towels and one for "bad," and some very specific folding techniques. The most victimless crime I was able to commit was to fold each towel in a different way and place the "good" towels in the "bad" towel area. The owner texted me several times, accusing me of not being able to identify what a good towel looked like.

My issue wasn't that I could not identify the good from bad towels, more that I didn't feel I could exist within such a limited dichotomy, and that navigating this binary was very subjective. She felt very strongly that this was not subjective. How could I commit *anything* to the bad pile? It's so limiting. I would hold up a tattered bleached out floor towel and look to my esteemed colleague and primary accomplice in the world of towel crime. I ask "Chelsea, would you say this is good or bad?"

A game of "good towel, bad towel" truly takes us through the moral maze. There might be a well-used towel that had done so much for us, we as community here, having wiped up so many cummy members, which would definitely go on the "good" pile. Then there was a brand new plush purple bath towel, which was clearly trying to cover your whole body. It was trying to shame you. Very upsetting. We put that one in the bad pile 'til it got a bit more vibe. We sit around with our varying degrees of skin rashes and bacterial ailments and play a round of "what's that smell?" We also have a guessing game called "top of the tops" where we speculate on the bedroom dominance of our mutual friends and acquaintances.

I think value, like towel quality, is also a very subjective matter. Like, when I meet this client, we are sitting in the waiting room and he is reading from a menu of sexual services available. He says "I'm not sure what I want, maybe I want to try BDSM?" He wants to know "Is it nice? Will I like it?"

This is his first time so I want it to be really special. I put him into a doggy position and hold his head from behind. I run my fingers through his hair and stroke from the nape to the crown, and then I lock my fingers in and pull. This action is happening and it's pretty swift and the ecstasy usually has a sharp opening and then a flow, but with this flow, I rip off his toupee. Here we are, eye-to-eye in the mirror, and the front of his hair is very clearly no longer attached to him, but he is understandably still very attached to it. I motion him to lay down and I am trying to reign it in, and I'm feeling a lot of things. I wonder if we need to debrief. He tells me he does not like BDSM. I think maybe he means he really feel deeply uncomfortable with having his toupee ripped from his scalp, which I do not think is prudish by any stretch.

We move to a calmer, vanilla, bed experience. The circle closes, I am in the shower, he thinks I cannot see him, like the water is an opaque veil between us. I watch him pick up a pillow and wipe his cummy member upon a taffeta cushion. Was this a revenge mop or did he really believe that he was in a place of such splendor that this was the cum rag we supplied, a bouncy one for his pleasure? Or was he taking "good towel, bad towel" to a whole new level? This cushion could have been in the extra good pile.

His eyes meet mine, and he informs me that he has had better times. I mean, haven't we all? Still, I challenge you to find a chintzyer receptacle for your seed, friend. I see him to the door and he glares and tells me I am bad value. I value his feedback, and place everything we shared into the laundry. I think of the phrase "it will all come out in the wash," and this understanding that everything will be ok once cleansed. I note that, many months after, this event is still with me, and I feel sure my bad value is still with him. We are together in this.

Movement in this industry is different to movement in other industries. I exit the massage parlour after filling my bag with treasures, announcing that I am moving interstate, then changing my phone number. I don't move interstate. Instead I work in a selection of South Side brothels, looking for my new forever home. Then, in deep winter, I spent some time in deep suburbia, at the North's premier strip club in an industrial estate. They have a sausage sizzle. That's not a euphemism; it's just an actual real BBQ event. Here in suburbia, it's my turn to take the stage. Once on the stage, it's nice to have fifteen minutes of meditative motion. They are playing Lana del Rey's "Video Games." I listen to this sad song and think "I do love the bad girls, and swinging with the old stars." Suddenly I'm crying, not sobbing, but water is coming out of my eyes. I worry about my eye makeup. You have to remember when crying with eye makeup on at the club to always wipe to the side, for a cat eye look, and not downwards, because that's a bit Cyber meets *The Crow*. Also never wipe in a circle, because that's just mall goth and not suitable for the strippers.

Maybe I'm crying because yesterday I did drugs to myself or because of some affairs of the heart, it's hard to know, there always so much to navigate. I build up momentum swinging round the pole—two people are watching me, they're sitting in sofa seats at the front. I lift and spin and then I lift, and don't spin, but I do throw myself off the stage. It wasn't like a bid to hurt myself, just more like I was momentarily weak against a gravitational pull, and as people, we are usually pretty good against gravity. Lana sings "*watching all our friends fall*." I did fall and now I'm lying at the bottom of the step. This interpretive movement piece needs more development before it's ready for a wider audience.

It is time for the sausage sizzle. We sit outside in a clump. Is clump the right word? There were a lot of us. What's a large group of strippers called? We are a blurring of spray tan, bikinis, hair extensions, and Ugg boots, eating sausages and drinking gins under outdoor heaters. My friend lets everyone know about my pole trick, so I get to relive the moment. Over and over. Then this song comes on, I don't know what it is, but the House Mum is trying to get all the girls to do this dance, a bit like the Macarena. She says "Queenie, everyone *has* to do the dance." Everyone knows this is simply not true as we have no contracts, we just turn up and get turnt up. I'm fairly sure this is not even a licensed adult venue. This venue has since closed down, backing up my suspicion on that matter. Saying everyone has to do it is more like a hard suggestion, nothing legally binding, one is just bound in polite social conduct. I like to try and be reasonable in these situations, what else can they ask from me?

"Umm it's just that I don't know the dance, so I don't really feel like I should do it, I don't want to compromise the integrity of the dance you know." "You'll pick it up, you're a dancer," she says. This is a generous statement. I say "No, you all look so nice with your choreography." She says "Just do it."

I'm not good at spontaneous things, so she gets up and dances, leading the others girls. The whole thing is like something from another time, from an age when showgirls did shows. At the end of the night, the House Mum gets on the mic and says "Well, everyone, we are closing. You don't have to go home, but you can't stay here all night." It's like the magic is removed from us all. The lights are turned on the night is over. We're doing reality to ourselves. It's over, not *over* over because things don't end. It's all episodic, but a new thing is happening now. Let's all lie down, let's do the plank, let's put this to bed. One needs to power down to power up.

OVERAMPED
HARM REDUCTION FOR
THE MODERN WORLD

You Can Call Them Scum, But They Are People Too

This month we're talking about the repression of drug users in the Philippines and hearing from AJ Santos of NYC. You may remember AJ from the cover of issue 411, The Pinoy Punk Issue, on which he is playing with his band Namatay Sa Ingay. Originally from a town called Pulilan in Bulacan Province, AJ has firsthand experience with the (quite literal) war on (suspected) drug users in the Philippines by President Rodrigo Duterte.

Duterte's tough on crime policies are said to be what won him the election in June of 2016. As part of his campaign platform, he promised to stop crime by locking up or killing anyone suspected to be using or selling drugs, despite the fact that drug use in the Philippines is statistically lower than the global average. In May of this year, he signed a proclamation of martial law on the island of Mindanao citing clashes between the armed forces and an Islamist group.

Duterte was once quoted as saying, "Hitler massacred three million Jews [um, more like six million....]. Now, there are three million drug addicts [more like one million]. I'd be happy to slaughter them...When you kill criminals that is not a crime against humanity. Criminals have no humanity." Yikes. Human Rights Watch has fittingly labeled Duterte's war on a drugs a "human rights calamity."

Within the first two months of Duterte's six-year presidency, 1900 supposed drug users had been murdered; at least 700 in police operations, and the rest by anti-drug vigilantes. About 10,150 had already been arrested. As of July 2017, it's estimated that over 7,000 alleged drug suspects have been killed in extrajudicial operations. Duterte has frequently incited citizen watchdog groups to commit murder in the name of the drug war: "If a criminal fights, and he fights to the death, you can kill him...Please feel free to call us, the police, or do it yourself if you have the gun...you have my support." Duterte has issued curfews for minors in many parts of the country in an effort to curb unscrupulous evening activities. However, this issuing was just recently ruled unconstitutional, one of the first major blows to Duterte's regime.

When we talk about drugs in the Philippines, we are mostly talking about meth, known colloquially as *shabu*. *Shabu* is hyper-prevalent in the Philippines, especially in low-income communities. It has become increasingly widespread over the past decade due in large part to its ability to help poor people to work longer hours. *Shabu* is cheap and accessible, but has been getting more expensive as Duterte's crackdown leads to increased risk in buying and selling drugs. Cocaine, marijuana, and ecstasy also constitute a portion of the drug trade.

Although Duterte consistently states that there are three to four million "addicts" in the country, the official estimate is a little under two million. He also says that he doesn't need a national strategy to end the culture of drug use in the Philippines. As a surprise to no one, Trump is smitten with Duterte's

Machiavellian tactics. A leaked transcript of a call between the two from April shows Trump as saying, "I just wanted to congratulate you because I am hearing of the unbelievable job on the drug problem. Many countries have the problem, we have a problem, but what a great job you are doing and I just wanted to call and tell you that." Really, fantastic role models we got here in 2017. Thanks, Obama.

Duterte's goons aren't just piling up the corpses, they're amassing prisoners too. In his first few weeks in office, the prison population increased by thousands. The conditions are reportedly appalling, especially in the metro-Manila area. Prisons are so overcrowded that people have to take turns sleeping because there isn't enough room for everyone to lie down at the same time. Many of the inmates have been picked up arbitrarily and haven't been formally charged, but they don't have the funds to make bail, roughly 5000 pesos or about 100 USD. The government is killing low-level, often impoverished, drug users instead of higher level drug distributors. Families are afraid that if they try to seek legal help, or even try to get answers, that they will be persecuted by the government.

As with most authoritarian regimes, there are gaping discrepancies between police reports of arrests and citizens' accounts of the same incidents. Hundreds of police officers have been accused of being involved with the drug trade as well. But, not to worry, Duterte has publicly threatened these officers with death too.

Speaking of the police, they have this tactic for inspiring drug surrenders called "*Oplan TokHang,*" or the "Knock and Plead Policy" in which heavily armed police officers troll the neighborhoods and *suggest* that drug users voluntarily surrender themselves. These "Knock and Plead" operations have been known to devolve into death squads. The initiative boasts 700,000 surrenders in just two months. Fifty-eight people were murdered in drug raids in just one week last month, including a former mayor. One recent incident that received a lot of backlash was the murder of a 17-year-old child, Kian Delos Santos, by the police in August. The police reports of the incident differ significantly from what was caught by CCTV as well as eye witness reports. Starting this month, the government plans to conduct random drug testing on high school students.

Jose Manuel "Chel" Diokno, a prominent Filipino human rights lawyer states, "This country is experiencing a climate of fear worse than the dark days of martial law under late dictator Ferdinand Marcos." But yet, despite all his critics, Duterte's support remains strong. He won the 2016 election with just about 40% of vote, and according to the latest polls, his approval rating is between 75–80%.

As we will hear later from AJ, there is a growing grassroots resistance movement against Duterte and those in power. But Duterte also faces opposition from his peers as well. Two of his most vocal critics in congress are Senators Risa Hontiveros and Leila De Lima, the former of which was a speaker at this year's International Harm Reduction Conference, and the latter of which is currently serving time in prison for allegedly violating the drug trafficking law. Many international bodies, including Amnesty International and the European Parliament, have called for De Lima's release, asserting that the charges against her are bogus and that she's a victim of political repression.

Duterte's regime has also spearheaded the creation of a mega drug-treatment compound. It is literally called the Mega Drug Abuse Treatment and Rehabilitation Center (Mega DTRC). It opened in November of 2016 and is projected to be able to "treat" up to 10,000 patients at once. It's huge. However, by the time it opened, there were only twenty trained drug counselors in the entire country. The compound was hastily constructed on a military base in just three months, and the plan is to hand the compound back over to the military when the number of drug users contained in it has magically increased and then drastically decreased in the next few years. Photos and videos of the compound reveal that is extremely structurally unsound. Currently, it is under the control of the Department of Health, but the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency has made it so that drug surrenderers can be admitted without a court order. In April of 2017, there had only been 179 patients, many submitting to treatment out of fear of repercussions. The Center is projected to have cost about $5 million in its first year.

AJ Santos hails from Bulacan Province, the state which suffered the deadliest single day in the drug war thus far. Thirty two "drug suspects" were slain and 100 more were jailed. Though this act got Duterte reported to the International Criminal Court for Crimes Against Humanity, he praised the raid nonetheless; "The ones who died recently in Bulacan, 32, in a massive raid, that was good. If we could kill another 32 every day, then maybe we can reduce what ails this country."

MRR: In your opinion, what brought upon Duterte's War on Drugs? What support does the government have for the killings?

AJ Santos: Duterte won by a landslide and was elected mostly because of his platform against drugs and corruption. He promised the Filipino people that he will get rid of drugs during his first six months in office. Of course that didn't happen. He has this image of a very strong leader that is pro-poor but the truth is it is the poor that he is killing. He has a lot of supporters because the people are desperate for change. The people are tired of the same faces in the government and they thought Duterte, as an outsider from the south who understands the problems in Mindanao, would bring real change.

MRR: How has Duterte's war on drugs impacted you or your family?

Four of my close friends were gunned down after he became president because they were accused of being drug users and they were on the so called "hit list" and if I ever go back to the Philippines my life will be in jeopardy too. I used to do a lot of drugs back then but I always knew I can change. My family believed in me and moving to the States gave me a chance to have a fresh start and a new life. I cannot go back because, even though I am clean for five years now, they can still put me back on that list. Even innocent people can be targeted and innocent people have been murdered. My family is scared, I am scared for my brothers and sisters and my daughter that is living in the Philippines right now. I always believe in second chances, that is why I am where I am right now. This regime is taking that away from people in the bloodiest ways possible.

MRR: Do you have friends or family that support Duterte? And in your opinion, what makes people continue to support Duterte despite the mass murders and high rates of incarceration?

Yes, I have a lot of friends who still support Duterte. They always think that the Philippines deserve a strong leader like him so that criminals will finally be scared. They are comparing him to Marcos saying we need a leader with an iron fist to finally get rid of drugs and crime.

MRR: What, if any, role does *shabu* have in the punk scene?

No role at all, some punks use *shabu* occasionally but there's absolutely no connection between the two. The punk scene was my escape from drugs when I was back home, music and being in bands helped me a lot during my worst times.

MRR: Has the punk scene in the Philippines changed at all since Duterte took power?

In my opinion, it did change but not a lot though. There are still shows even if there are curfews. The scene is still active. I guess the difference is that punks are more careful now, especially when it comes to politics. I remember when we posted a video of our band talking about the killings in the Philippines and someone sent me a message telling me to be very careful of what I say now because the regime's supporters has a big online presence.

MRR: Is there a support movement for jailed Senator De Lima?

Senator De Lima is affiliated with the Liberal Party and is also the former President's Secretary of Justice. She was also accused of protecting drug lords while she was in office. She has the support of the former administration that is now the opposition. I really don't think that they represent the Filipino people though. There is a growing movement in the Philippines that is called the National Democratic Movement. It consists of peasants, farmers, working class, teachers, etc. who are speaking out against these political figures and I think they are the ones who truly represent the Filipino people. Not these aristocrats and political dynasties.

MRR: Is there anything else you want people to know about the situation in the Philippines?

I want the people to know that real change cannot be achieved by bloodshed. The reason why there is crime and drug dealers is because the people cannot get jobs in order to feed their families. The people cannot get education because they would prefer to feed their belly at least once a day than go to school they cannot afford. We have to know the root cause of these problems. I am not an expert in these matters but maybe the government should focus more on solutions like land reforms, agriculture, industrialization, etc. rather than killing the people who put them in charge. I am speaking based on my experiences of having friends who used to be drug dealers, thieves, criminals, or whatever you want to call them. You can call them scum but they are people too. And they are the ones who fed me when I had nothing to eat, they welcomed me in their homes when I ran away from my parents. They are people with good hearts and all of them deserves another chance in life. Hope is for everyone. I am speaking to you right now because of that.

Thanks AJ for shedding some much needed light on this issue. Things are shit everywhere right now, and that feels totally overwhelming for everyone all of the time. But the global community that allows us to have these conversations and flow of information; that's still pretty sick to me. Look out for your international neighbors in punk. I know that everyone is tapped out on rage right now. But please, if there is any room at all for more hate in your heart, reserve a tiny sliver for Rodrigo Duterte. Thank you.

futures
and
pasts
*erika elizabeth

The time that I've spent writing this month's column has been marked by all sorts of strange happenings and general flux. The skies in Portland have been smoke-streaked and raining ash for days because a couple of jackass kids tossed firecrackers into the evergreen forests of the Columbia River Gorge to the east of the city, setting tens of thousands of acres of trees ablaze in the process. My hometown of Houston is still largely underwater after catastrophic hurricane-triggered flooding, and even though it's been twelve years since I left the city, this might be the first time that I've felt so genuinely separated from it, helplessly watching from the opposite side of the country as the places and things that defined my formative years (for better or worse) are completely upended. I quit the radio show that I'd been doing for the last year and a half because the pressure of coming up with a two-hour program week after week without repeating myself was making me lose my mind just a little bit, so I'm back to doing a podcast from my apartment whenever inspiration strikes and I can already tell that it'll be a better change for me. And I started a new band called COLLATE with two friends a few months back that finally recorded this week, just in time to make some tapes for a short tour down to California in mid-October—come hang out if you're in Chico, Los Angeles, San Francisco, or Oakland and you want talk about oddball '70s and '80s post-punk records with us.

Five years after Dark Entries's remastered vinyl reissue of UK minimal wave duo LIVES OF ANGELS's 1983 cassette *Elevator to Eden* they're back with a brand new LP collection called *Hole in the Sky* drawn from the group's unreleased odds and ends and archival tracks sourced from hyper-obscure tape compilations. In contrast to some of their aesthetically similar contemporaries like SOLID SPACE or SECOND LAYER, LIVES OF ANGELS didn't splinter off from the fertile early '80s UK post-punk scene, and in fact vocally rejected it—multi-instrumentalist Gerald O'Connell apparently dismissed everything from the era with the exception of COCTEAU TWINS, DEPECHE MODE, and NEW ORDER. The influence of the latter is especially apparent, and when O'Connell's wife Catherine takes her turn at the mic (see "I Know About You" or "After Dark"), the result is a sort of striking bedroom synth-pop driven by the mechanical heartbeat of a vintage drum machine, suggesting slightly ragged takes on "Ceremony" or "Age of Consent" as sung with the detached warmth of Alison Statton of YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS. The Gerald-sung songs "Call Moscow" and "Somebody Else" also point to some shared wavelengths with jangly home-taping pop freaks CLEANERS FROM VENUS, who appeared on more than one mid-'80s small-run cassette comp alongside LIVES OF ANGELS. Best of all might be the dark electro-punk minimalism of "Look Out Kid," spun almost entirely from reverbed drum machine clatter and retro-futuristic synthesizer that connects the dots between KRAFTWERK and the NORMAL. (Dark Entries, livesofangels.bandcamp.com)

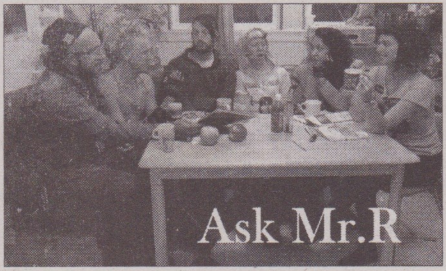
We move now from an obscurity dug out of the archives of the 1980s cassette underground to something more contemporary that could convincingly pass for the same. *Imagery* is the debut four-song tape from MIDNIGHT GARDEN, which appears to be one person armed with a four-track machine in modern-day Toronto crafting fever dream post-punk that sounds like the half-decayed remnants of a demo originally sent to Rough Trade in 1981. The driving melodic bassline running through the opening and standout track "Structures" immediately had me thinking of early FOR AGAINST (clearly going after my own heart here, as I've been trying to rip off the same for years), cutting through the cavernous echo of some tom-heavy drumming and deadpan vocals buried under a thick fog of tape hiss. Then there's "What Moves You?" with its insistent back-and-forth of scalpel-edged single-note guitar and pulsing bass that occupies the liminal space between the stark, rhythm-minded approach of Factory Records' early '80s post-punk faction (think pre-electronic SECTION 25) and the desperate and moody atmosphere of goth-adjacent bands like the CHAMELEONS. When you're this reverent of your source material, it's all too easy to come off as overly forced and derivative, but the roughed-up and off-kilter aesthetic of these recordings gives MIDNIGHT GARDEN the homespun spark that made the first wave of fiercely DIY post-punks so provocative in the first place. (whatmovesyou.bandcamp.com)

TABLE SUGAR have been making the minimalist art-punk of my dreams in Olympia since at least late 2016 when their demo *Introductory Material* first surfaced, but it took a tip this summer (from my friend Jay over at *Dynamite Hemorrhage*) for the band to actually be brought to my attention, despite all of this brilliant racket happening less than two hours north up I-5 from me in Portland. For any of y'all who rightfully flipped your lid for LITHICS, take note: TABLE SUGAR are truly the next great post-punk weirdos of the Pacific Northwest. Sparse, taut guitar lines stretch out between throbbing bass and choppy drum beats like the string connecting a pair of tin can telephones, while twin vocalists intone their parts over one another in cool monotones and ecstatic shrieks, sometimes within the span of the same song. "M.e." even throws some violin into the equation which will undoubtedly evoke some references to the feral femme spirit of the RAINCOATS, but much like their freewheeling Australian counterparts in BENT, TABLE SUGAR are guided less by any rigid adherence to the scratchy groundwork laid down by the RAINCOATS (or DELTA 5, or the AU PAIRS, or...) and more by their foremothers' general gleeful refusal to color inside the lines. (tablesugarband.bandcamp.com)

Blown-out basement punk newcomers STRANGE FATE hail from the woods of Western Massachusetts, where I spent most of my twenties enduring way too many shows dominated by mysterious guy hardcore bands who were in various phases of moving on from fawning ORCHID worship. I was so desperate for something like this during my time there—frantic, no frills, femme-led DIY racket, with dual yelped vocals from guitarists Callie and Lindsey that bring to mind those first two NOTS singles when they were still inviting endless "KLEENEX meets the URINALS" comparisons. STRANGE FATE have the same penchant for whiplash choruses consisting primarily of shouted chants, with most of the songs careening to their end in just barely over a minute. For sheer econo-punk brilliance in 2017 look no further than "I Don't Wanna Know," whose lyrics are little more than the title delivered over and over in a snotty sneer over slashing guitars and urgently bashed drums for exactly 60 seconds, although the breathless repetition of "*don't tell me! / don't tell me nothing!*" on "Round Up" is pretty great too. (strangefate.bandcamp.com)

Oakland's MINERALS are the latest offshoot of the GRASS WIDOW family tree (the shared DNA is from bassist Raven Mahon), and the new trio's *EP One* demo builds upon the same melodic but slightly gnarled framework that made GRASS WIDOW such a revelation in the early twenty-tens. All three MINERALS sing, sometimes with one voice in isolation and sometimes with multiple intersecting parts that briefly overlap in quietly unassuming harmonies, backed by guitar lines twisted into complex shapes and rhythms that subtly shift between tension and sprawl. "First / Firth" and "Third / Therm" are the EP's gauzy, slow burning, pop visions, while the loopier, bass-driven, lilt of "Second / Second" and "Fourth / Forth" nods to all of the coolest women of the late '70s and early '80s post-punk universe. Someone please do a vinyl release of this as soon as possible! (minerals2.bandcamp.com)

Say hey at ripitupstartagain@gmail.com, more sights and sounds at futuresandpasts.org.



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though.*

(...and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx.'")

One of my friends is on meth and in an abusive relationship with a boy who is also smoking meth. I don't know how to help her without her thinking I'm trying to control her life or make decisions for her. What do I do?

There are plenty of ways to help somebody through something without having to appear as though you're controlling their life. In fact, without having to take on the actual responsibilities that running everything for them would entail at all! And really that life-running sort of thing is never effective anyway.

I know that when you see your friends going through hard stuff, your buddy instinct is to just try to take over and drive for them, but people who have their choices taken away tend to run the same circles over and over again until they finally feel that they are ready to make changes and to move away from their situation on their own terms.

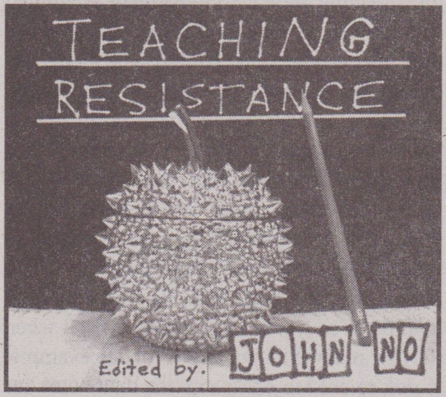
If you aren't a person who has had the experience of being a drug addict, or being someone locked into an abusive relationship that you're not ready to shed, you might not realize how much shame and fear and resentment can be tied up in there, not to mention how those emotions can be magnified or warped by the effects of whatever chemicals they may be ingesting. All those elements can really affect the way you might see a friend who is coming to you saying "have you tried...", "if I were you, I would...", or "why won't you..." And while you can't force them to stop doing the hurtful thing you believe they're doing, one way you actually can continue to reach out is by letting them know you're still around, not judging, and that you can even help them be a way out of the situation when they're ready for one. Like for an example, if you're able to offer a couch that's safe for detoxing, or a place to sleep if they ever need to get away from physical and emotional abuse at home, or if they need someone to be able to talk openly and honestly with, try to listen and offer advice without being a know-it-all, and *especially* for when they will need a hand eventually transitioning to standing on their own feet again.

The stuff they're dealing with can be so dehumanizing, knowing that they have a person who gives a shit who is still present in their life can really make a difference when they're trying to decide how hopeless everything really is, or if they are actually as worthless as they feel. When you're all alone it can make getting clean seem impossible, or the possibility of becoming single, even when the relationship is terrible, seem very lonely.

I'm not going to advocate for sticking out a one-sided friendship that is detrimental to your personal well-being though. Sometimes a friendship does actually become toxic when things are broken long enough, so it's up to you to draw that line wherever you deem appropriate, you don't have to let someone walk all over you / take advantage of you to show that you're invested in them, but a lot of people will give up a hard friendship pretty quickly purely out of judgement or fear and, when they aren't given the opportunity to control the outcome, because things look differently than they might have wanted them to.

Try not to perceive your friend as making too slow of progress or judge them too harshly if they slide back, make mistakes, or choose things that you would've done differently. Remember that it ain't your life, you're just trying to be a good support system, and people have to do things in their own way at their own pace.

Send a text / phone call to 510-585-HELP with all your questions, opinions, tips, and whatever else to be answered within the pages of Maximum Rocknroll! *So exciting. Send in email form to: ASKMRR@MAIL.COM.*



Radicals know better than to make assumptions that any nation-state, particularly one based around a capitalist system, will have a government that will meaningfully provide for all its residents and work consistently to increase universal equitability and social justice—at best, even the most seemingly-benign of such governments must be relentlessly pressed upon, and often actively resisted, to ensure that it maintains basic respect for and accountability to its people. However, living in the United States, particularly in openly neo-fascist times such as these, it is easy for me (and many other people) to indulge "grass is greener" fantasies about what life must be like living under the robust social welfare systems of other countries, particularly those in Northern Europe, though we are aware that the prosperity and relative social equity found in these countries is often the direct result of colonialist genocides, exploitation, and centuries of theft. And while it is true that quality of life for most people is overall better in, say, Germany, if one scratches the surface it can become evident that the brutality of capitalism, exploitation, and intensive political oppression of radicals can lay very close to the seductive surface indeed.

*This month's Teaching Resistance is written by **E. Schmuse**, a political radical and teacher in the German state of Bavaria. E. Schmuse is a pseudonym, used by the author out of necessity due to harsh Bavarian state policies about the personal political ideologies (to say nothing of actual activism) of teachers.*

Teaching in Bavaria: Making Up and Finding Leeway

I hesitate when I'm about to tell people that I work as a teacher. Not only because I am still in my first year, but mostly because I don't agree with so many aspects of the Bavarian three-tier school system. To give people a rough idea of Bavaria beyond *lederhosen* and *Oktoberfest*, some use the tongue-in-cheek comparison "It's the Texas of Germany." Drawing on stereotypes, the implied notion is that of a southern, very traditional, religious, and conservative federal state that sports a strong sense of identity and historical uniqueness. By and large that is true for contemporary Bavaria. Although its history is indeed fascinating, and at times quite ambivalent in its political currents, it is more than fair to write that it is one of the most conservative states in Germany: tough law enforcement, mostly exclusionary and monolithic concepts of identity and language, adherence to the Roman Catholic Church, the list goes on...It is the largest federal state by land and second-most-populous state in Germany and has been governed by the Christian democratic and conservative CSU (Christian Social Union) without coalition partners since 1962. The responsibility for the education system in Germany lies with the federal states. Again, Bavaria has a reputation for being rather conservative but also for providing a fairly high standard of education compared to other federal states. That is partly ascribed to the extensive training you have to go through when you want to attain a teaching degree for Bavaria. For the highest level of secondary education at a "Gymnasium" (sometimes compared to British grammar schools or prep schools in the United States), aspiring teachers complete about five years of studies at a university and sit final state exams in at least two majors, which can be compared to almost a master's degree in both subjects. In my case, those are English and history, with the addition of social studies as a third. After university, the practical part of teacher training takes another two years, followed by a second state exam—the preparatory service or "Referendariat."

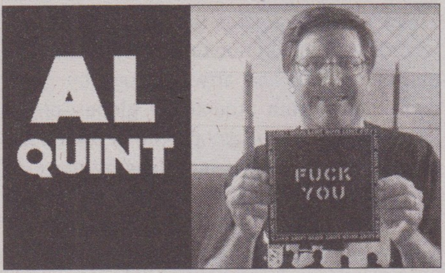
This is when reality hits the student teachers. To apply and register you have to sign that you have never financially or ideologically supported one of the organizations and parties named in a very extensive list. It includes a variety of religious sects and fundamentalists, extreme leftist and right-wing groups, and terrorist organisations. In short, groups that do not uphold the values of the German constitution. While that makes sense not only from a state's perspective, two items on that list should be pointed out here because they epitomise the general political climate in Bavaria. One is the democratic socialist party *Die Linke* (The Left) which is one of the four parties represented in the German *Bundestag*. Without question, the foundation of the party showed very problematic ties to the Socialist Unity Party (SED) that ruled the GDR, but is now as a whole neither considered as extreme left or as a threat to the democratic and constitutional order in Germany by the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. This deviation from the federal policy is nothing unusual for Bavaria. In practical terms, you cannot become a teacher in Bavaria if you are a member or supporter of *Die Linke* which, regardless of one's political affiliation, can be fairly described as one of the most vital opposition parties in Germany. The second remarkable item is listed as "anti-fascist action coalitions." Although the Ministry of the Interior claims that the individual case is decisive, the broadness of this phrasing is deliberate and dangerous. It leaves every teacher with leftist views in a relative state of insecurity in times when populist and anti-democratic views are becoming a reality in the political landscape. To give a few examples: The far-right party AfD, or *Alternative für Deutschland* ("Alternative for Germany"), is likely to pass the 5% electoral threshold in the upcoming federal elections. By and large peaceful protests against the G20 summit in Hamburg were portrayed as civil war-like events by the tabloids. The German Minister of the Interior Thomas de Maizière announced (on August 25 2017) that Indymedia Linksunten, a German Indymedia site, was to be shut down and raided and he demanded tougher stances and prevention programs against the "far-left." Right-wing violence has reached a frightening peak with over 3500 attacks on asylum seekers and shelters in 2016. Despite the brevity of my experience as a teacher, reality has shown that conservative, right-wing, and discriminatory views have surfaced quite openly at times. Be it the racist or anti-Semitic joke that is casually told by one fellow history teacher in training, or the member of the school administration who openly reads books from a publishing house known for printing volumes full of conspiracy theories, esoteric nazism, right-wing populism, pseudoscience, and far-right politics. Upholding political stances in the workplace may be seen as a complicated topic by some, but if the very documents you signed to work as a teacher leave deliberate room for interpretation of what is "too extreme" on the left side, another layer is added to these concerns. Needless to say, it is essential to speak out and uphold emancipatory and anti-fascist views in times like these. However, questions arise: could you be removed from your position as a teacher because you attended a talk or discussion organised by a local group that might be considered "antifa?" What if you use antifa symbols at concerts you organize (perform at, or attend) to show emancipatory and inclusionary aspirations for that particular event or space? What if you take part in a demonstration against fascist groups? Could that be already considered an unacceptable form of an "anti-fascist action coalitions?" Is it necessary to use a pseudonym when you write about a political issue?

This might be the time to explain the title of this essay: "Making Up and Finding Leeway." "Making Up Leeway" is why I decided to become a teacher despite the structural conservatism of this work environment and despite these questions and concerns. Structural change in the Bavarian education system might seem frustratingly slow and at times even unobtainable. Hence, it is more than understandable why many socially and politically conscious or active people might eschew a profession within the constraints of the education system, but in practice, I strongly believe that it does make a difference which teacher stands in front of, or amid, a class of young people. Conservatism is left unchallenged if key positions that might enable us to question and shape society are left to the conservative.

"Finding leeway" is, therefore, to identify and use the corridors for action in the curriculum to emphasize critical approaches to the educational content. It is fortunate to see that the Bavarian curriculum in fact provides that option: exploring the ambivalence of nationalism in the 19th century, teaching about the importance of the Lutheran reformation but also challenge his anti-Semitism, giving pupils the opportunity to learn about European voyages across the globe in the Early Modern Age, but also mention that "discovery" in this context is far from being a neutral or appropriate term. Not only history lessons, but also English classes offer the possibility to discuss current events and highlight progressive perspectives. Some textbooks might still use the words "Indian" but at least they cover the discrimination against Native Americans in the film industry. It is then in the hands of the teacher to provide learning opportunities to question exclusionary concepts of society, to reveal political ideologies of phrases and words, to show that some of the text, images and videos are not just material to learn about defining and non-defining relative clauses, introduce new vocabulary, or function as an occasion to speak in English. Given the right approach, they have the potential to inform, to challenge, to spark critical thinking. Idealistic? Of course—but not impossible.

Despite the forces of conformity within the education system, teaching has the power to encourage *"what Brazilian Educator Paulo Freire […] expressed as the very essence of being human – the ability to act in and (re-) create reality through culture, and to be in the world not just as a participant of history but as creators of history. In this light, revolution and societal transformation is not just an inevitable result of history but an objective reality organized by people conscious of their own consciousness and drawing on their creative abilities mediated by particular historical objective material conditions."* (from Malott, Curry, and Peña, Milagros. *Punk Rocker's Revolution: A Pedagogy of Race, Class, and Gender.* New York: Peter Lang, 2004. Print. 6.)

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers / educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory- and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), Community Colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. There is also an archive for this column which can be found online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.



HOW MUCH ART CAN YOU TAKE?

When people think of Boston's original punk era, their attention is usually focused on bands like the REAL KIDS, UNNATURAL AXE, LA PESTE, NEIGHBORHOODS, DMZ, and NERVOUS EATERS. They think of legendary clubs like the Rat (or Rathskeller, as it was formally known). Thing is, while those bands were doing something loud and energetic, it was still rock'n'roll based. Nothing complicated, nothing too artsy-fartsy.

Still, there were bands who had artier inclinations, who came from a different muse than the more rock'n'roll oriented bands. Not that they didn't rock but there was a wider variety of influences and approaches. GROUND ZERO, the GIRLS and the MOLLS are a few examples.

GROUND ZERO released a pair of 7" EPs, in 1979 and 1980, each with four songs, all of them compiled onto a self-titled album on the Rave-Up label as part of their *American Lost Punk Rock Nuggets* series. In addition, there's a nearly half-hour video called *Televoid* that you can find on YouTube. It's a video and aural bombardment that's mostly a collage of miscellaneous clips and a few glimpses of the band in the live setting. The song "Ground Zero" is accompanied by video of nuclear tests, while "Cybernetic War" shows a primitive video game (Asteroids, maybe?). No narration or words of wisdom from the band. They let the art speak for itself.

To give a bit of background, GROUND ZERO formed at the Star Systems Loft in Boston's South End. I never had the privilege of going there but it was an early DIY space and was home to a number of performances by the likes of LA PESTE, the GIRLS, MISSION OF BURMA and visiting acts like the CONTORTIONS (my god, can you imagine what it must have been like to see those guys at a loft show?) According to the liner notes on the Rave-Up album, Star Systems was "a group of musicians, filmmakers, photographers, xerographers, artists, and videographers who decided to join skills to produce an anarchic, movable, musical and visual feast combining post-war angst and deconstructed '60s pop with Dada and existential influences." Pretty heady stuff—certainly an ambitious scope. And if that seems too arty for you, at their core, GROUND ZERO dished out some pretty hard-edged fodder. One can hear similarities to CHROME, with the drill-press guitar sound and synth washes. But GROUND ZERO were capable of straight-ahead punk blasts, too, as with "Nothing" on the first 7". That song ended up on the *Killed By Death #12* compilation, and the liner notes were kind of dismissive of them (dross and pseudo-punks were two terms used), but they're wrong. The sleeve for that first 7" comes in an oversized full-color xerox jobbie with small images from live shows. Not quite abstract but certainly leaning that way.

The GIRLS were part of that loft scene but they'd also play places like the Punkt Data Gallery and their practice space was at the Modern Theatre, a building that bordered on Boston's "adult entertainment" district the Combat Zone (the Modern also screened adult films in the '70s). During their existence, ca. 1976 to 1980, they only released one 7", *Jeffrey I Hear You,* on PERE UBU lynchpin David Thomas' Hearthan label. Mr. Thomas produced it, in fact. It's one of the great lost gems from that era of Boston punk, a nearly six minute excursion that builds to a psychotic conclusion. Daved Hild's vocals become increasingly desperate and unhinged while the song's driving rock is punctuated by Robin Amos's synth-mania, which was a key part of their sound. The B-side is a nice bit of UBU-esque melody-meets-atonality. Besides the 7", there was a 1986 album *Reunion* that wasn't a reunion but a collection of unreleased songs, along with "Jeffrey" (but not "Elephant Man"). The quality of material varies but they hit the mark a good chunk of the time. "Vietcong Women," with its synth drone and eastern guitar lick would, once again, fit in nicely on an early UBU album.

They were capable of wanton punk bash, as well, on the relentless "Keep It Simple" and "Methodist Church," which cribs a bit from the SEX PISTOLS' "Sub-Mission." Elements of krautrock certainly inspired their music, CAN in particular. If you listen to that band's "Father Cannot Yell," it's not too hard to discern where they were coming from on "Jeffrey." In fact, Amos later worked with former CAN vocalist Damo Suzuki in his band CUL-DE-SAC.

Unfortunately, the single and album are long out-of-print and definitely worthy of reissue. There are a couple of easier-to-find releases, such as *Live At The Rathskeller 5.17.79* which has somewhat lo-fidelity sound quality but they effectively bash their way through their material. Some real punk scorchers here, "Just Got Back" and "Stiff Bird" in particular. The 2015 Feeding Tube Records release *Punk-Dada Pulchritude* (a pretty good description) is a collection of rough-sounding early demos. Opening track "Never Did Believe In" is a numbing, repetitive mind blower and the best song by far. There are two versions of "Little Suburban Territory" and the second one dabbles in No Wave mania. They were more experimental at this point, not yet veering into more traditional punk territory.

A few years ago, in another column about obscure Boston stuff, I mentioned the MOLLS' single *White Stains*, which was a stomping avant-punk classic. It had the requisite pogo punch but was accompanied by driving keyboards and even electric bassoon. Future MISSION OF BURMA drummer Peter Prescott played on the record. They played the first punk show I ever saw, with the PLASMATICS at the Rat. They didn't upstage Wendy and her chainsaw but I remember that particular song. The B-side, "Is Chesty Dead," is atonal skronk and not as memorable. Most of these guys went on to play in SOMEONE AND THE SOMEBODIES in the '80s, with a fair amount of success. Their best song, "People Are Dumb," was on the *A Wicked Good Time Vol. 2* compilation. That's something I've been singing a *lot* lately. Their bass player Tris Lozaw became a music journalist, one of the few credible local rock scribes.

If any of this intrigues you, my old friend Jordan Kratz (from early Boston punk band the TRANSPLANTS) has a website with a shitload of free downloads including music from all three bands. Hit it up atbigmeathammer.com/koehler.htm. Make sure you check out the TRANSPLANTS, too. They were more of a straightforward punk band and had LA PESTE drummer Roger Tripp in their ranks for a time.

NOT AS MUCH ART, JUST NOISE

I'm not sure if LIMP WRIST's new 12" *Facades* is meant to be a mind-fuck, an attempt to reach out beyond the hardcore punk realm, or an exercise in musical enlightenment for the closed-minded. Maybe it's all of the above. Whatever the case, *Facades* is probably not what a lot of their fans expected, at least for the three tracks on side two, where they delve into electronic dance music. That's right—EDM. Thing is, they're *not* throwaways, as one of my friends opined, but meticulously constructed excursions. The best of the three is "Systems In Place," mixing electronic rhythms and synth blips with live drumming and stinging guitar licks. If that's a bit much for you, on the top side, they still effectively hammer out sharp and blistering hardcore punk with lethal musical skill. A few melodic flourishes here and there, particularly on "Como Vos" and "They Tell Me." The theme for the latter is about how people try to lump all queers into one group. Enlightenment is at the core of what LIMP WRIST do, along with affirmation. It's OK not to become part of the "gaystream," as it's called, but to revel in being queer, being different, being an individual. There's a 40 page zine that accompanies the records and, in addition to the lyrics, there are essays, photos, and artwork done by queer contributors from around the globe—pieces about oppression of gay people in places like Singapore and Indonesia, a lengthy piece on queer photographer Alvin Baltrop and even a Martin paper doll. Provocative in many ways and provocation is what we need more of.

DAGGER's *Writhing In The Light Of The Moon* 7" came in the same package as LIMP WRIST and this Northwest Indiana band uncorks six tracks of lo-fi, raw as fuck '80s style hardcore. I'd imagine they didn't break the bank on the recording budget but who needs flashy production, anyway? Pure hit and run. (Lengua Armada, martincrudo.bigcartel.com)

Some great punk and hardcore came out of the western provinces of Canada during the '80s. Everyone knows about DOA, THE SUBHUMANS and NOMEANSNO from British Columbia and probably SNFU from Edmonton. But there was more than that. Two Winnipeg bands, STRETCH MARKS and PERSONALITY CRISIS, have just had compilation CDs released on the new Sounds Escaping label. All of it's been remastered and both collections include detailed liner notes with musings and reminiscences from band members and other friends. I'd imagine both bands might be somewhat obscure to many readers and this will hopefully remedy that.

The STRETCH MARKS disc, *Who & What—The Complete Studio Recordings*, is drawn from their *Who's In Charge* 7" and *What D'ya See?* album, plus a few compilation tracks and one unreleased song. They had a bit of a gimmick, that being pro wrestling. When I interviewed them for *Suburban Voice* in 1984, we actually spent a fair amount of time talking about that instead of music. But this isn't any novelty act—only one song dealt with that topic, "Turnbuckle Stomp." STRETCH MARKS were a boisterous, rough'n'tumble punk band, packing a thrashy punch, topped with Dave McCombe AKA Dik Savage's gruff vocals but it's also deceptively melodic at times. The lyrics were thoughtful and often poignant, dealing with such topics as suicide, child abuse, and societal decay. And if the goofy "Dogs World," with its barking chorus, or their enjoyable cover of CCR's "Bad Moon Rising" doesn't make you smile, then give up 'cause there's no hope for ya.

PERSONALITY CRISIS also had a fast-paced, hard-hitting, punk attack but infused it with hard rock and metal, "rock'n'roll that shocks people," as vocalist Mitch Funk described it when I did an interview back in 1984. According to the liner notes that accompany this two disc compilation, PC actually eschewed the punk label but they certainly moved in that direction over years. That's readily apparent as you trace their history from the three demos included on the second disc to their *Creatures For Awhile* album on the first disc, which also includes pair of compilation tracks. The band's shifting personnel definitely had an effect.

PERSONALITY CRISIS's earliest demo, from 1981, comes from more of a JOY DIVISION realm and isn't particularly good. Things started moving in the right direction with their second demo, recorded late in 1981, after drummer Jon Card joined the band, with songs like "Shotgun" and "Empty Sky" hinting at what was going to follow. The transition was completed on the 1982 "Club Foot" demo, their hardest-edged material up to that point and six of its seven songs were re-recorded for *Creatures*. The album itself is an explosive, high energy affair, especially the fast and furious "People In Glass," while "Mrs. Palmer" (about, uh, self-gratification) and "Name Dropper" are burning rockers. PERSONAILITY CRISIS could play their asses off, but it wasn't show-offy and, at the center is Mitch's distinctive, nearly *basso profundo* vocals. It takes some getting used to but his voice effectively conveys the sometimes dark lyrical matter. Mitch said that that a lot of their lyrics came from dreams, as well as personal observations and there's no lack of imagination. (soundsescaping.com)

Finally, KATASTROF is a project that pairs Poffen from TOTALITÄR with Martin from HERÄTYS (they were also in INSTITUTION, together, a band I *really* wish I'd seen when they came through here some years ago) and their five song, self-titled 7" is as ripping as you'd expect. Poffen's been doing this for over three decades and hasn't lost a step. Martin proves himself adept at all of instruments—even the stampeding drum attack—to create a blazing wall of sound. I'd love to see this in the live setting if they ever get over here. (Beach Impediment, beachimpedimentrecords.bigcartel.com)

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TURBO
&
GANG
STILL THE NEW BREED

We Are the Pogo Class

Well fuck. After having multiple—sometimes embarrassing—conversations with patient friends I've come to the conclusion that donning full boots and braces has the potential to be terrorizing to people of color in my neighborhood. ("No shit!" yells the peanut gallery.) No matter how much I know in my #1 cropped heart that I don't represent a physical threat to my black neighbors the only thing the public at large sees is a fat Nazi. (My white neighbors see me as a threat also, but that's becuz my back porch is a rusty-saw junkyard where I smoke cigarettes, and not a prayer-flagged fern-forest. Fuck 'em.)

I'm not calling out other skins for repping skinhead culture or dressing how they want to dress. All I'm saying is that, when a friend brought up that my going to the grocery store in boots and braces is inconsiderate to the people I live around, my response was one of anger and deflection and skinhead cliché, something like, "Fuck them, hated and proud. Someone thinks I'm a Nazi, let them say something. I know what I am." Then I took a breath, yelled "Skinhead!" and walked thru a wall like a Gumby out of *Monty Python*. What a charmer I am! Further examination of my response and repeated spins of "Can't Cheat Karma" left me with this obvious brain nug: my insistence on wearing a threatening subculture uniform regardless of the revulsion, contempt, and fear it might cultivate in those I have no beef with is a definition of white privilege. It is figuratively saying, "I care more about my boots than my neighbors." (Again, my non-white neighbors; not my Blue Apron buying, Subaru driving, North Face wearing, art washing white neighbors.)

Also, this shit isn't concrete in my brain. Are shows neutral territory? I'd think that punks are enough in the know. And I give way less of a shit if a punk—regardless of race—is offended or threatened by my *accoutrements*. I don't know, I'm open for the global readerships opinion's on the matter. Skin's opinions more than others. I'm still testy (short for "testicle") when it comes to punks and squares telling me how to dress. Sorry, sorry, there's that ego. I'm uncomfortable when non-skins offer up their opinion on the topic, but those opinions are actually sought and valued.

Anyway, I could wear a "*Maximum Rocknroll* for Bernie Sanders" t-shirt and it still wouldn't dampen the blinding power of Oi! Oi! music. And away we go!

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KÄNSLANS PARTISAN – *Koloni i Norr* (self-released): Hey Antifa peeps! Ever feel left out when all your non-anarcho-collectivist friends are gushing about how great Viking rock is? And you're all like, "Daw! I wish there was a band that combined the power and presence of BLÅ BRIGADIER and ULTIMA THULE with radical left-wing anarcho-regionalism while eschewing the nationalism and sketch-flirting that plagues the genre!" Well, to you my little Emma Goldmaniacs, I say wish on that red star no more! Jah Kropotkin has heard your cries! KÄNSLANS PARTISAN is the band you've been looking for! From the fjords of Swedish Lapland these alt-lefters bring you the newest hyphenated genre: anarcho-Viking-rock! It's metal! It's folk! It's Oi! It's full of ideas you already appreciate! Occupy Oi! Occupy Everything! Fuuuuck! (kanslanspartisan.bandcamp.com)

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KNOCK OFF – *Like a Kick in the Head* CD (self-released): This is KNOCK OFF's third album in as many years. The vibe on *Like a Kick in the Head* is early / mid '90s Helen of Oi! Think ANOTHER MAN'S POISON or DISTORTION...but not that good. If you're looking to work out yer delts or traps pop this baby into the boombox. You'll be shrugging off songs one after another.

The content is vague and uninspired; complaining about "keyboard warriors" and someone selling their "glory." I'd say this was a dog whistle or virtue-signaling but it's missing even a resemblance of a backbone. "*It ain't right*! / *Stand up and fight*! / *Settle the score*! / *We'll go to war*!" Against who and how? By complaining into a pint of Pride at the pub? Yeesh! It doesn't even pass for Oi! pastiche. I can get behind some solid cliché when it's done well. Who doesn't like PINK PANZER or HARD SKIN? This aint that. The song "Are you Offended?" isn't even a good anti-pc song fer cryin' out loud! How can anyone be offended at a band that doesn't say anything at all? These dudes could be yelling at their mom for all I know. PG-13 Oi! I'm sure the LP will be out on Randale or Contra or Pirate's Press. Pass!

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OUTREAU – LP (Crom / UVPR): Put on those raincoats you yobs! Cuz the clouds are rolling in! OUTREAU returns with their debut LP, filled with ten tracks of dark hardcore Oi! Vocals are the sound of a shredded epiglottis, the guitar is overdriven into a brick wall and the low end rumble on this record will destroy your roommates bone session fer sure!

OUTREAU can ably describe the feeling of being stuck in anger and despair: "*Burst! / I'm gonna burst! / Burst! / This should all burst! / I got this fire to spit / Much frustration to speak about / This life of second class citizen has got me / Pushed to the limit!*" while retaining the ability to pinpoint their criticism: "*Your dream in '63/ Nearly came up and got shot in the back in my reality / Does anyone else deserve to get shot? / Shot down! / Did Michael Brown deserve to get shot? / Did Tamir Rice deserve to get shot?*" Lyrics are from "Second Class Citizen" and "Protect and Serve," respectively. Other songs touch on the global financial crisis, the Bataclan terrorist attack, loss of friendship, poseurs, PTSD, and even a good ol' fashioned crew anthem for their regrettably named "Mongo Crew." Other than that small blemish OUTREAU's first album is stellar and deserves recognition as such. *Merveilleux!*

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RUDE RIOT – *Dishonor* LP (Anachronism): Hailing from Kiev, RUDE RIOT are four skins who play menacing, Oi! influenced hardcore. They're also straightedge? Or maybe just into working out and being healthy? There are strong youth crew elements and more than a handful of pick-slides and sick solos that roar out of sicker breakdowns. You know what this is. They cover "The Sound of Revolution." You feel me? It's tight. This is gonna get slept on hard which is a shame cuz if this came out as a 5-song 12" on Lost Legion or Katorga Works all you nerds would be asking yer dad for early allowance. "*Our friends, our crew from the streets! / Smash the politicians with Oi! beat! Oi!*" Don't snooze.

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THE UNBORN – *Apoi!calypse* CS (Skinhead Sounds): The Fiend, The Blob, The Fog, The Shape, and The Ghoul are the noms de guerre of the five hooded individuals who make up the UNBORN. I'm glad these weirdos sing in their native *Italiano* otherwise this might be too hokey. Think the stage show of MIDNIGHT but instead of blackened-sex metal, slot in fast and scrappy Italian Oi! with strong NWOBHM influences. Strange and good! Side A song titles translate to, and are about the movies, "Night of the Living Dead," and "They Have Changed Their Face." Flip the tape and you get "They Live" with a fitting outro that could have been culled from an unearthed JOHN CARPENTER score. If you're into the odd, this should appeal to you. And same for fans of outside the box Oi! "They live! We sleep! Conform! Watch TV!"

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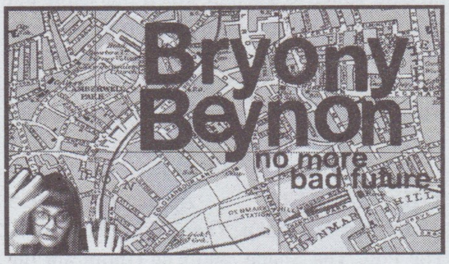
There goes another month of Oi! And this train doesn't stop! Already got a few things lined up for next month. Canada! Poland! The UK! Maybe, Houston?! Who knows? Not me until it's almost too late! Take care of your livers!

ENDNOTES:

1) If you'd like to offer up yer opinion on the intro topic or call me some variation of "cuck-skin" or "snowflake" or any number of things I've already been called becuz I write for a "junkie mag like *MRR*" (more like a one-hitter and PBR mag probably...) my email is: AmericanBootGang@Gmail.com

2) Again, cuz this shit is a time capsule: Ric Merrill died on August 18th 2017. I'll miss him.

3) I attended parts of Skull Fest 9. The Oi! show with ROGUE TROOPER, NO TIME, THE BRASS, CONCRETE ELITE, RIXE, and the SUSSED was killer. All bands delivered the goods, there were zero fights and my opinion of NO TIME was changed. Their LP, *You'll Get Yours* is posthumously placed in my Best of 2016 List. See them if you can. I also made it to the ten band multi-floor anarcho / crust / goth cavalcade extravaganza show. Turns out I don't give a shit about OMEGA TRIBE live thirty years later or the PROLETARIAT (at all). Winner of the night was SHADOW AGE from Richmond, with BELLICOSE MINDS, SILENCE, ARCANE and UNMAKER being enjoyable surprises. Also, the punks looked much cooler at the goth show than the Oi! show. Just sayin'.



Bodies! I'm not an animal. Been thinking about the vessel. I catch my shadow limping lumpily towards its own reflection in the scratched plexiglass of the bus shelter. I cringe at my reflection before any part of my conscious brain can jump in to stop it. Thirty-one years is long enough to know what you look like. Me and my flesh bag. It's complicated.

In January, we moved into a flat full of mirrors. Ben had done the viewing without me, and hadn't mentioned that there was at least one wall of reflective surface per room, thanks to the standard issue built-in storage doors. Deep horror. Mind jumps ahead. Is there such a thing as adhesive black out paper? There is a reason we say that you "catch yourself" in the mirror. The moment passed but it was a reminder that some impulses are never fully unlearnt. I dance in these mirrors now. This has been a decade of slow unpicking, not conscious for the most part, but being finally (and finely) tuned to the frequency of my body's dispatch radio without fear brings with it new and exciting sounds. Strangely it also means more pain. No longer separate, I'm able to hear from a sore knee, take clear feedback from a gnawing muscle in my back.

Mine is no long line of sleek gazelles, oh no. Even my father has his mother's hips. My whole family had form for refusing our bodies, struggles amplified during the years when we lived as five. Mother, a professional yo-yo dieter by her own admission, had grown up a pillow in a house of chair legs. My middle sister had perfected every excuse required to just not eat, including passing me her packed lunches at an agreed spot in the playground, while oldest sister attended slimming clubs with mother as a preteen, hid under huge sweaters, scowling all the while. I was ten when she shat yellow oil for a week after buying diet pills from the back of a magazine. I weighed my up options, all of which seemed to involve retreating into being, first and foremost, a body, to be monitored, starved, regulated, whatever. So I ran from mine. I went vegetarian at age twelve and refused to eat lettuce or onions because they made me think of cells. Bodies. Mealtimes were a minefield with regular casualties. I pierced my septum with a kilt pin and refused to treat my chronic asthma and eczema.

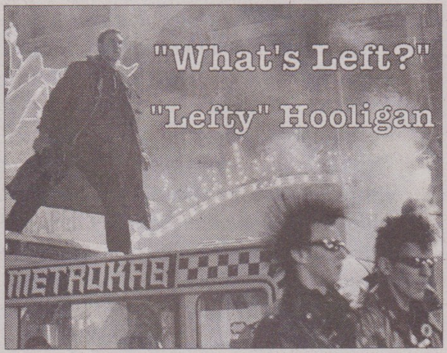
Applaud the conveyor belt of time, because my sisters are both now happy awesome people and mothers to cars full of beautiful healthy children who eat whatever they like, and I've just about grown out of acting like a brain in a jar. For one, I lift, bro. About my gym: firstly, it is a women's gym. I had a brief period of working out ten years ago when an old job gave me a pass, but I did it mostly out of hatred and I spent each session trying to hide from the glistening wet men. My gym is called Betty's. Betty is a severe Italian-Australian with a turmeric tan whose medals for Miss Natural Body (3rd Place World Champion) are displayed in a case alongside protein shakes and scented candles on sale for $40 each. I watch myself in a mirror. I am not there to change my body, or what it can do. I clock no progress and count no miles. I just move. Exercise as a joy rather than a chore brings with it a reconfigured definition of pain, tied not to dread but achievement. I will occasionally wonder what I must look like on the treadmill, but mostly let the thought pass. I count the thud of my feet making contact with rubber without the need for numbers. I suspect that the 50-plus-year-old cohort of tubby grans are also just happy to stave off angina, so we are as one. Bodies. In spite, or perhaps because, of this, Betty has taken a health first approach to her gym's environment, informative, but with a hint of David Cronenberg. The TV screens cycle through a set of explicitly gory Powerpoint slides where she has Google Image'd the end results of vitamin deficiency, apparently either unaware or choosing to ignore that due to various structural factors, her clientele are largely safe from diseases like beriberi and scurvy. I love it.

Shout out to the one punk out there who must have once contracted scurvy. I have always queried how archetypal punks seem to just naturally inhabit their bodies, in a way I never could. This pulls up some half-discarded shame memory of having to dart ahead in advance of whichever carefree crew I was marauding with, just in case there would be a fence to climb or a wall to skip, factoring in an assumed deficiency in my body that was never really there. This in mind, the primal joy of seeing and communing with fat punk women is hard to verbalize. The joy is only multiplied when it is big gals playing music, which gets me thinking about the strange power of performance.

I have sort of always sung, not generally that well. I remember the day when I finally quit my protracted four years of progress-free piano lessons. It was just after I had taken (and failed) the third grade, which was assessed in a locked room above a shop selling manuscripts of Chopin and the Beatles (the "pop contemporary" section) that reeked of mold and children's fear. I was only allowed to quit the dreaded piano if I took up something else, and persuaded my tired, defeated teacher to just switch over to singing. Miss Todd had slightly translucent skin, magnifier glasses, and brown-grey hair tied in a knot. She was English too, which marked her as doubly "outsider." I felt certain that she loved other women but I didn't know what shape this could possibly take. Someone had used the word "spinster" to mock her, which also sounded horrific. Soon, she had me belting out scales and parroting weird folk songs from the fifties about lavender bushes and "gay mulattos." I was told it was all in the technique, so despite her best efforts I never did learn to read sheet music. The idea of pulling sound from my body in accordance with the black dots seemed like witchcraft then and still does now even as I acknowledge that is literally what reading aloud is.

Soon, Miss Todd realised these lessons would be more productive if she just sang to me and I sang back with my eyes closed. Time moved on and I got an Andrew Lloyd Webber (*Cats, Phantom of the Opera,* rank old Tory) songbook. Bitch knew I loved those show tunes. Transported out of time and place, I dug the overblown romance and the charm of playing a character. I didn't know all the plays, but one of songs had a verse that begged "*Don't call me at* threeyaayeemm *from a friend's apartment*." I was a flat-chested Welsh girl who'd never been to an apartment or three in the morning, but I instructed my imaginary lover in a full throated soprano just the same. There is another line which is burnt into my brain. "*I'm a woman / when you touch me / I'm child when you are leaving / I'm a woman / every time our bodies meet / complete.*" My whole body cringed crimson with embarrassment as she projected out each line, and I duly sang it back. Repulsive and obviously written by a foul old man on reflection, but neither of us were getting any, let's be real, so maybe it was as therapeutic for her as it was me. The words could have been anything, but I was thirteen and my body had still never "met" anyone, and I was terrified, so there was comfort in the strange psychic cosplay. Pretty soon after this I used one of these songs (from which play I still do not know) to audition for a local youth theatre, and the rest isn't in any way history (unless you're a historian of patchily attended Dylan Thomas plays staged in the late '90s) but it certainly helped me out.

I played a gig for the first time in over a year last week. Singing properly this time, too, not just shouting. This time I stretched first because, like I said, I live inside my body now. I fold, inhaling the burn as it blooms down from under my bum to the start of my ankles. What is more corporeal than jumping and shouting and writhing in front of people? With sweat, spit, hair stuck to face, piss leaking from between legs. (My friend Katie told me a few days into tour that wee sometimes comes out when she sings. I have never felt so validated although with me it's more likely to be a fart). On stage—even if the stage is the floor—I am forcing them to see me. Them is also me. I am pure energy. No one here knows me beyond a few months of carefully curated interactions so this sensation is only heightened. The euphoria pours out of me. This is what I can do. I drink tea from a bottle before we play like a diva, terrified for the first time of being tripped up by my vocal chords. I am in my body, moving it. Dancing between outside it and inside it. I'm staring accusingly at the blank space where a set of shoulder should be holding up a face, but there are no lit features to reflect me back. Project yourself. I express and you are forced to sponge it up, at least for five songs plus a cover, sucka. The mirror we hold up to ourselves melts in the moment that self-perception becomes self-realization. Only for as long as the song, sure, but perhaps karaoke is the closest many people will get to this. An audience is a window not a mirror. Halfway through the set we sing a cover of one of my favorite songs. I wail out the words in an entirely different tune to the original. It works. "*I hold your color / when my vision is gone.*"



It's called "sweetening."

It's a certain type of background music and ambient sound for films and TV shows meant to enhance mood and emotion. It's also called juicing, but it's intended to be subtle, behind the scenes, muted. Sweetening is not supposed to be too obvious. For instance, when a live audience is recorded anywhere, a laugh track / canned heat track is frequently blended into the live audience track to amplify its effect, whether of laughter, clapping, booing, whatever.

The term has its origin in old-time radio, when sound effects like horses galloping, doors opening and closing, characters walking, gunshots, etc. were used to paint visual detail in a non-visual medium. Again, it's not all dramatic sound effects. In films and TV shows, it's not the sound of violent explosions or roaring monsters. The sweetening is in the sense of foreboding portended in the background music, or in the subsonic infrasound used to generate apprehension in the audience prior to some climactic scene. So while "sweetening" comes off good and positive, it might as well be called "shadowing" or "darkening," depending on what effect the sound is intended to enhance.

As for political sweetening, two recent examples come to mind. The Tea Party ended up sweetening the Republican Party from the right, as did Bernie Sander's "political revolution" the Democratic Party from the left. Both movements started as popular revolts against their respective party establishments and their mainstream politics, both helped rewrite their respective party platforms, and both moved the politics of those parties respectively to the right and left. Both threatened to break away to form independent third party efforts, both were blamed for the potential demise of their respective political parties, but both ultimately succumbed to political opportunism, cooptation, and marginalization. Or at least the Tea Party succumbed and wound up faking a hard-times protest movement, spawning affiliated get-rich-quick cottage industries, and successfully rebranding the GOP. Bernie's "political revolution" has blended nicely into the much broader anti-Trump protest movement, so it remains vibrant and very much in the streets. Ideally, this popular resistance needs to avoid opportunism, cooptation, and marginalization, but that's very difficult to do if the Tea Party is any indication.

What doesn't count as political sweetening was Occupy Wall Street. OWS doesn't count for much at all now, despite initially being praised by authors, artists, celebrities, politicians, and pundits as the greatest thing since sliced bread. I've never hidden my disdain for OWS. It may have personally changed lives like the bad brown acid circulating at a mediocre rock concert, but it was just a flash in the pan that changed little politically. So unless the inane consensus hand signals and annoying human microphone are included, no innovation of any consequence arose from OWS. That also covers the communizing "occupy everything, demand nothing" campus activism that emerged among protesting California students in 2011.

OWS ran with the franchise activism common nowadays, where an indistinct idea was widely disseminated and then taken up by local activists who made it their own through locally flavored community actions. The movement's core idea, embodied in its name, was so nebulous in fact that it produced both the anarcho / ultra-left, black bloc, streetfighting Occupy Oakland, California, and the virulently anti-Semitic, conspiracy-theorist, ultra-right Occupy Tallinn, Estonia, with every political combination in between. So, while the majority of OWS-affiliated actions tended left wing, liberal, and even anarchist, there was considerable involvement by right wing, conservative, and even fascist elements. In this way, OWS displayed troubling Left / Right crossover politics similar to the anti-globalization movement which preceded it. This was not by chance but by design, given the decentralized, all-are-welcome nature of the movement's organizing message. This was complemented by the ambiguous categories employed by OWS, most prominent being "the 99%" versus "the 1%." This promoted an uncritical populism that studiously avoided any class-based analysis, but it denied any identity-based analysis as well, instead encouraging an amorphous, dumbed-down, Hardt / Negri-style notion of "the multitude."

When finance capital comes to the fore, capitalism itself is in decline. Capitalism has abandoned industrial production for financial circulation, meaning that its profit-making comes not from surplus value transformed into capital but from mere exchange. For OWS then to focus its vague critique of capitalism on Wall Street and finance capital was to target a decaying economic system as if it were still robust, misinterpreting capitalism's retreat as a *faux* advance. To see the enemy as attacking rather than as withdrawing was a delusion that badly skewed the tactics and strategy required to take on and defeat that enemy. If nothing else, this falsely portrayed finance capital as stronger and more powerful than it actually is, reinforcing the right wing trope that "international bankers" rule the world. Excuse me, "banksters." From this, it's a half-step to the "international Jewish conspiracy for world domination" that is the ultra-right's favorite meme.

Spencer Sunshine has written a detailed survey called *20 On The Right In Occupy* through the Political Research Associates think tank which provides thumbnail summaries of anti-Federal Reserve, anti-Semitic, white nationalist, fascist, and neo-Nazi individuals and groups involved in OWS. These strange right and left bedfellows in OWS are not so odd once we realize that anti-Semitism is also on the rise on the Left. Case in point, the post-situ *Adbusters* Magazine from which the original OWS call came. From Kalle Lasn's *Adbuster* article discussing fifty influential neoconservatives under the title "Why Won't Anyone Say They Are Jewish?" to *Adbuster* tweets that took up the alt-right's outing of Twitter users as Jewish by surrounding their names with parentheses, Left / Right crossover politics abound. Not that *Adbuster's* leftist politics aren't sketchy in so many other ways, what with their support of Israeli anti-Semite Gilad Atzmon and Italian conspiracy theorist Beppe Grillo. They do act as a political transition to the hard Left's anti-Israeli, anti-Zionist ideologies, which too easily and too often become outright Left anti-Semitism.

Back to my point earlier, there are people who are not at all happy that Bernie's "political revolution" has blended nicely into the much broader anti-Trump protest movement. These folks are the mainstream Democratic Party establishment liberals who blame Sanders and his "Bernie bros" for Hillary Clinton's defeat. *Salon* executive editor Andrew O'Hehir had a wonderfully sarcastic takedown of their *status quo* recalcitrance awhile back:

> *But another running theme in Democratic Party apologetics informs all that, which is the ingrained desire to blame the left-wing resistance for anything that goes wrong — and to insist that it isn't actually the left at all but sort of, kind of, the right. Hence Wolcott's argument that the DudeBros and 'purity progressives' of the 'alt-left' are in some undisclosed manner closely related to the rebranded white supremacists of the alt-right. Or maybe it's just that he doesn't like either of them.*
>
> *To return to our central premise: The DudeBros ruined everything. Their workings are malicious, and marvelous. They are simultaneously clueless, puritanical and all-powerful. In between Ultimate Frisbee tournaments and Vampire Weekend marathons, they elected Donald Trump, wiped out the Democratic Party between the coasts, rioted against Milo Yiannopoulos in Berkeley and / or defected to the alt-right en masse. They develop apps whose functions remain mysterious, and that most of us don't know how to use. Unforgivably, they made the Phish reunion possible, and now it will never stop.*

Hence, conflating "terrorist" James Hodgkinson with "crazy" Jeremy Christian, or antifa "alt-left" with fascist alt-right.

The Democratic Party establishment wants the anti-Trump resistance to be a left-wing Tea Party, the energy, individuals, and organizations of which the party can exploit to win future elections, while ultimately domesticating, coopting, and marginalizing that resistance. They want the Left's resistance to be the Democratic Party's sweetening. This is exactly what we don't want to happen if we want the anti-Trump resistance not to suffer the same fate as the Tea Party.

Of course, it's much more complicated than "Bernie or bust" versus the Democratic Party. Politics to the left of the Democratic Party also includes progressives, democratic socialists and social democrats, Leninists, and the black bloc anarcho / ultra-left. But it's never been an equal playing field with the Democratic Party *vis-à-vis* the rest of the American Left. The Democrats are the 800-pound gorilla in the room. Even decimated, at their lowest point in fifty years, the Democrats continue to wield vast power and influence. Which is why we need to prevent the vilification of the black bloc or the Bernie bros or Jill Stein's Greens or anyone else as a convenient scapegoat for the Democratic Party's mistakes and woes. I'm not so naïve as to think what we need is a united or popular front; some mystical kumbaya circle jerk of leftist unity. But we don't need the Democratic Party and its liberals running the show either.

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EUROPE: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE

BY METTE HELMS

How do you know if punk is dead?

In the past week, I've said the damn phrase "punk is dead" over and over while placing record orders and coordinating an upcoming show. What a contradiction. It's clear that punk isn't dead and gone when there's still shows and records to spend my paycheck on. I thought to myself, "Is it just the Copenhagen scene that's dead?"

I've realized that I've never explained what the current Copenhagen punk scene is like in this column. Copenhagen has a population of one million, and the punk scene here is quite small. A regular show draws twenty to thirty paying guests, while bigger bands can draw eighty guests, with the exception of a few big shows a year. Despite the small scene, there are two or three shows a week within the punk and metal genres that cater to those associated with the punk scene. Everyone in this city is either a current or former booker and there are a few handfuls of decent local bands with a few "superstar" bands among them. The venue situation is good here; there's the venue and social center Ungdomshuset, which is the home of most shows within the DIY scene, the annual K-Town Hardcore Fest, and a handful of rehearsal spaces with the typical punk aesthetics and smell. Apart from that famous venue, there are seven or eight venues that regularly host shows with bands associated with the punk scene, some more commercial than others.

No, punk in Copenhagen isn't dead in the sense that there are no shows, no bands, no labels, nothing. But, the scene has grown emotionless in my eyes. At first, I thought I had lost my passion for punk; shows don't take up a big part of my life anymore and are less important to me since I've landed a permanent job with late night and weekend shifts. Volunteering at a show behind the bar or sound booth isn't exactly what I dream of doing in my spare time. My involvement in the scene has been reduced to K-Town Hardcore Fest (which honestly is like a second job for six months a year) and putting on a show if the right band comes along (which means one or two times a year). Isn't it disrespectful of me to claim that punk has grown emotionless while I've become less and less involved?

Yet I wouldn't say I have lost my passion. I'll dare to claim that Copenhagen punk has lost its passion and emotions. Everything moves in circles here and shows feel like deja-vus of past shows. The "how to make a punk show" recipe is being followed thoroughly, so the only things separating this week's show from last week's are the bands playing and the flyer layout. It appears that people are longing for shows in new surroundings, yet shows in new locations or with new themes are haunted by a general attitude of insignificance. Maybe the cause can be found in the social construct *law of Jante* that burdens Scandinavia with expressions like "you're not to think you are anything special" and "you're not to think you are good at anything." Copenhageners can be cold and impossible to impress.

My thoughts about the current state of my local punk scene keep circling around the live shows. A show is the most public manifestation of punk in a city like Copenhagen, where posters are plastered all over the city, attending only requires paying a small fee at the door and there are no secret "ask a punk" venues. Punk, like anywhere else, is based on community and friendship, but in the sense that certain circles of friends co-exist in the scene. The utopia that punk is a big community, where everyone is friends with everyone and included in everything just because they are a fellow punk, is an illusion. Luckily, this doesn't compromise the participation in public events in the Copenhagen scene, but in terms of creating and evolving, the question of whether the scene is too exclusive arises. Social structures, such as that damn *law of Jante*, and closed mindedness is inherited from the rest of society, and let's admit it, it is hard to be open to new ideas and trusting new people wanting to create things within the scene. How does a scene find the right balance between the two extremes snobbery and blindly trusting strangers?

I'll keep this question open and move onto talking about the one thing that got me here in the first place: music. When I first got into punk, local bands would attract huge crowds frequently. Yes, the scene was a lot bigger then, having grown with the loss of the old Ungdomshuset in 2007. I wouldn't say the bands were better back then, but there was a certain amount of popularity connected to them. This period was right as when the first waves of K-Town Hardcore was dying, but legendary local bands like GORILLA ANGREB, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ were still popular, and are still popular today as recent reunion shows have gathered huge crowds. Songs from ten to fifteen years ago are still widely played in DJ sets and are in a way anthems of the Copenhagen scene.

While the band NIGHT FEVER does have the same cult status in this city, they have been active for almost a decade. No other bands have either lived long enough or produced material of such kind that has people singing along as they do to the NIGHT FEVER lyrics "*this is Copenhagen, man*" and "*this is the new blood, oh yeah*" or to NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS' "*it's a rainy day, it's a rainyyyy daaayyy*." Copenhagen is longing for a new big band that could bring the scene together and re-start the passion for punk.

I have the impression that Copenhagen punk is dead in the way that there's a lack of emotions and hence it's going nowhere. Punk doesn't necessarily have to evolve and go anywhere, but the Copenhagen scene has grown too comfortable and because of that, it has become boring. And was punk ever supposed to be comfortable anyway? Is this the effect of the Danish "*hygge*" culture? To me, punk is not to blindly follow others and the "punk rule book," but to constantly figure out what you want punk to be and follow that. There is no denying that there are activities and bands in the scene, but do they act merely as life support for a brain-dead patient that we can't bear pulling the plug on?

Maybe Copenhagen punk must die so it can be reborn.

FELIX HAVOC
FIN DE SIÈCLE ANGST

By the time you read this the fallout of the Nazi rally in Charlottesville will be old news. A few months ago, I wrote about America's turn to the hard right and how it was empowering the radical right-wing; I have written before in this space about events like the Nazi march in Skokie and the Greensboro Massacre. These events are something one may have read about as a young activist in the early '80s. I think MDC wrote about Greensboro on one of their inserts. Now, many years later, all of the same issues are up the flagpole again. Times have changed somewhat, the reaction to the killing in Charlottesville was a little different than the reaction to the killings in Greensboro. But we hear the same tropes trotted out: that it was really the anti-fascists who provoked the Nazis and Klan and that there is some kind of moral equivalency between every point of view. It kind of depends on your perspective, but current events could either be viewed as minor clashes in the march of history like Skokie and Greensboro, or as the beginning of the end as America slides into a fascist dictatorship.

I would argue that this is not about moral equivalence. To me, it is about a moral obligation to take a stand against fascism and put it in its place before it grows more powerful. Let us not forget the last time fascism rose to power it was not stopped by candlelight vigils and morally outraged op-ed pieces. It was stopped by the combined military and industrial might of the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and many other countries. When fascism was on the rise in twenties and thirties Germany, there were brutal clashes between radical left-wing groups, usually Communists, and the Nazis. All of the same arguments made today were made then. The left was accused of being no better than the Nazis, of sinking to their level, of being their moral equivalent, etc. Most of those who condemned the anti-fascists of the twenties and thirties grew rather quiet on the subject when they saw the reality of Nazism unfold. One of the most common question students ask when learning about the Holocaust is "Why didn't anybody see this coming and try to stop it?"

Much like in those days, police and other law enforcement spend most of their time harassing and arresting counter-protesters and anti-racist activists and protecting the Nazi groups. There are many who believe that part of the radical right's current strategy is to bring masses of counter-protesters out into the streets and provoke violent confrontations. This so that they can spin the narrative in the right-wing media that they are law-abiding citizens exercising their freedom of speech and that counter-protesters and minorities are the radical element disrupting society. This is the exact same narrative that Nixon rode to power in 1968. He ran on a call for "law and order," which essentially meant repression of minorities and activists.

Like many others, I attended the Women's March right after the election. There was a great deal of collective outrage at the direction the country was going in. It was great to see tens of thousands of people out in the streets of St. Paul protesting. However, without organization and a means to resist, all of those people could be in prison camps in six weeks. The key point is, when push comes to shove, the establishment will choose law and order and a good climate for business over civil unrest in the streets. Faced with widespread unrest or racial tension, law enforcement will enforce white supremacy and crack down on political dissent, thereby empowering the radical right and silencing critics of the system with the most to lose. Many of the activists of the sixties talk about a freeze out. This is the theory that, at a certain point after 1970, being a civil rights or anti-war activist meant serious commitment and risk of imprisonment and all but the most die-hard activists casually moved on in the face of massive repression. This left only the most radical fringe on the front lines and they moved to a more and more extreme position until they were mostly neutralized.

Ever wonder why activist groups of the past few years like Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter haven't added up to much? One possible reason is that their leadership is infiltrated by undercover operatives who are doing their best to nullify the efforts of the activists involved. Traditionally, the police and intelligence agencies have dedicated huge resources to disrupting and suppressing the civil rights movement and the radical left while giving the radical right a free pass. Indeed, history has shown that the membership of much of the radical right overlaps with police military and intelligence groups.

Nazi groups love to talk about free speech when they are out of power. But, of course, one of the underlying objectives of fascism is to silence all opposition once they are in power, usually by the most violent means. Let us remember, the First Amendment restricts the government from suppressing free speech. It does not prevent a record store from not carrying a racist band's album or a DJ from playing it. It also does not restrict the rights of counter-protesters to exercise their right to free speech and lawful assembly. However, when these extremists protest, the police always wind up arresting many of the counter-demonstrators.

In Charlottesville the police showed up with a weak presence and allowed right-wing extremists to openly brandish weapons and paramilitary gear. One was even allowed to take a pot shot at counter protestors with a pistol right in front of the cops. Many argue that just the fact that the radical right is able to display armed force has a chilling effect. Contrast this to the highly militarized police response to Black Lives Matter in Ferguson where police showed up with riot gear, military weapons, and armored vehicles. Imagine what the reaction would have been if the Black Lives Matter protesters had showed up carrying assault rifles and wearing helmets and flak jackets. From the Black Panthers to Philandro Castile, it has been shown time and time again that when Blacks try to exercise their same constitutional rights to bear arms as right-wing whites they are heavily repressed and or shot dead.

Mao once said that "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" and he's hard to disagree with on that point. A quick look around shows that the guns are mostly in the hands of radical right and the police and paramilitary forces, who certainly cannot be counted on to prevent the armed radical right from further violent acts. Hopefully this winds up being a tragic historical interlude like Lincoln Rockwell's almost forgotten Nazi party, but I think it would pay to be vigilant and have the bullshit detector working over time.

Totally
Lame
with Neve Be

CW: For discussion of and detailed account of a white supremacist statement.

The other night I was watching some inspirational garbage TV, as I am wont to do, with Tony and my dear friends Spark and Eric. I like inspirational garbage TV, but sometimes it punishes me for my affection. Tonight the specific multi-kulti hands across America fare was *So You Think You Can Dance*, which I sometimes parody with my integrated dance workshop, "So You Think You Can't Dance??!" The premise of the 14th season of *SYTYCD* is that contestants originally get narrowed down from thousands by the panel of supposedly esteemed judges, and then get further narrowed down by ten "all-stars" from previous seasons, until competing on the shows are ten pairs of all-stars and "America's Favorite Dancer" hopefuls. Each week, all of the dancers get assignments from choreographers in various dance styles.

On the episode we were watching, two white dancers were assigned African Jazz choreography. I'm not sure what that is other than a compound word, as jazz grew out of African dances, but so is the way with genres; they exist if someone with a face says they do. It's not unusual for dancers to learn choreography which causes them to participate in cultural appropriation to the nth degree. This dance was no exception and in fact made a glaring example. To see these lithe, very white white people crawling, somersaulting, and pirouetting in what was supposed to be authentic reminiscent tribal South African garb gave me a headache. It was really bad. I winced and grimaced until it was over, thinking that at least during the judging they would make an effort to not be as minstrelsy-y as they were during the dance. But fuck. No. The younger dancer, who was competing, went from dancing to doing offensive impressions of a language he didn't know the name of let alone know how to speak. The audience and judges laughed uncomfortably or quite possibly very comfortably and then Nigel Lythgoe, that white British ballet dancer of days gone by and the show's executive producer said literally this, "I've seen those Zulu dancers in South Africa. And those guys are small. They have thighs the size of tree trunks. They couldn't have done that pirouette that you did."

And it was like my chest had been struck. All over the country right now white supremacists are trying to prevent Confederate statues from being ripped down. They are being safely escorted out of community spaces where they are attempting to deface art dedicated to Latinx heroes. A white girl is murdered while protesting white supremacy and it is yes, a tragedy, but the country seems much more enraged by her death than the less glamorous deaths of thousands of black and Muslim people who have been murdered by police, found quartered, found hanged, in the last few years. And here on *SYTYCD*, a mainstream television show which prides itself on its representation of dancers of many races and backgrounds, white supremacy is being sanctioned. I attempt to make a prehistoric bird sound. An absurd yet threatening squawk or crow or hiss, but it comes out a very human baby sob. I keep sobbing. We stop the show. I know that my white partner and my best friend who is Native and white and their partner who is Native and Mexican can hold me. But I feel humiliated anyway. Because there is something about still holding the four year old part of you alive and cognizant. The part of you that wanted to be a ballerina before she wanted to be a punk or a sex worker or a tattooed dancer model actor. The part of you who is subsequently being told by one of the largest networks on television that your body is disgusting, and can't do what white bodies can do. Let alone what white able-bodied bodies can do.

What is it about white artists, be they mainstream high brow choreographers, hardcore punks, graphic novelists, et al., that makes them think that art that centers and glorifies whiteness is somehow both the most skillfully rigorous, and the most inviting and inclusive? What was so amazing about that racist judge's critique of the dance, was that he was not even acknowledging that there are no ballet terms in Zulu dance, because innovations and inspirations in European-American concert dance come from Africa, not the other way around. How can you refer to a group of people performing a dance they created, and say how you imagine that their bodies would not have been able to perform the butchered version of their dance you created for white dancers and audiences to perform and enjoy? And so we have a paradox of sorts, that whiteness and its expressions are somehow both extremely accessible and extremely inaccessible. And of course, whether they know how to think about it or not, many white people like it like that.

The fourth principle of disability justice is cross-movement organizing, and coalition building, which is basically intersectionality 2.0. People throw around the word intersectionality, and say how we have to "think about it," but all of the white non-disabled cis and "first world" feminists thinking about intersectionality doesn't seem to be making our lives any easier or cooler. Black liberation, immigration justice, Indigenous sovereignty, trans justice, prison abolition, environmental justice, these things all strengthen our disability politics, and disability politics strengthen these movements as well. They also can help people understand their own struggle and desires much better. Coalition building, to me, means actually investing in another person's needs and desires and believing in the righteousness of their liberation. It is not just gazing at what you believe to be a whirling disaster of someone's life and marvel that it's even real. As Spark said the other day, there's a difference between feeling and caring. You can feel for someone who is going through something you have not and never will someone who is far away from you socially and literally, but caring for them is a different, beautiful, beast. Caring is a bridge with a back. It grows itself through intimacy or proximity, or you build it gradually. But if it's made by only your will to connect and sympathize, and not also through empathy, and with sustainable sacrifice and it's possible it will crumble beneath you. The complications of care though, shouldn't scare us away from feeling and building paths for connection. For some reason, the less marginalized people are, the better they think they are at empathizing, at care, at providing safe and stable spaces for people who have experienced things they have not. They also somehow think they deserve safe and stable spaces the most, and care the most.

When I look at such white dancers from afar, I hate them. I don't fucking care about them. I imagine there is no hope for our connection. I often feel that way about men, about nondisabled people, about straight people, about rich people. I don't always need to change that feeling. But as it turns out, there are white queer people I love or want to build coalition with, there are nondisabled people of color I want to love or build coalition with, there are disabled people I want to love or build coalition with. There is no map of a person I would absolutely hate, there is nobody that could sing every song well, do every dance well, there is no art that is for everyone. But there are bridges to be made across the expanse. And the people of *SYTYCD* and commercials are not my allies. They are whirling disasters who are not even real to me. But I fucking feel their racism anyway. Next time, I'll be ready, I'll be a large bird.

ENDNOTES:

1) In this moment, I am not regretting my face tattoos.

2) Nikkita Oliver did not make it through the primaries, but Ed Murray did resign from being mayor for being a child rapist.

3) I'm going to be performing in Berlin November 5–12 and I would love to see a show. Where should I go? Email me: foxlovesriver@gmail.com

MOM, LOOK, I'M IN A MAGAZINE!!
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"No Maggie Thatcher and No Government": Britain's 1980s Punk Revolutionaries and Why We Still Need Them

by Scott Blackburn

In 1979 the world was embroiled in what Ronald Reagan would describe after coming to office in 1980 as a battle between "good" and "evil." The Cold War had embroiled primarily the US and the USSR in a non-direct battle for international dominance. In May of 1979 Great Britain elected its new Prime Minister: Margaret Thatcher. She was Britain's first female Prime Minister and came to power off the back of promises to fix Britain's crippled economy, reduce the power of the trade unions, and bring back what she believed to be core British values. By the early 1980s it had become clear just how much she was willing to do to see her aims carried out. Many at the time and since have viewed her coming to power as the ignition of a class war that had been boiling under the surface of British society throughout the 1970s.

British punk rock had become a commentary for this view that was widely accepted to be reality. The implosion of the SEX PISTOLS in 1978 and the CLASH's departure to the US to make it big had left a vacuum in Britain's once thriving punk scene, though not for long. The period from 1979 to the mid 1980s saw an explosion of new second wave punk bands across Britain. The style of these bands varied hugely from the dedicated anarcho-punks such as CRASS to the more "take a bunch of speed and have a laugh" types like the EXPLOITED. Second wave punk bands throughout Britain had come from a nation that was still healing after the devastation of the Blitz during World War Two and had gone from post-war boom to being forced to go cap-in-hand to the IMF to be bailed out of economic crisis. Being surrounded by a broken nation suffering through political and economic turmoil led many in the punk scene to become open challengers to Thatcher's ever growing power.

The primary and most obvious method of insurrection adopted by British punk rockers was simply the lyrics they used. At the more blunt end of the spectrum with the EXPLOITED the attacks came mainly in the form of insults. Much like the lyrical genius that was "Wankers": *"Maggie had a sex transplant / and now she's got a cunt / Michael Foot's retarded / He's in politics for fun."*

More sophisticated lyrical attacks were carried out by bands such as VICE SQUAD and CRASS who picked a more satirical line, targeting specific issues. CRASS in particular were extremely critical of Thatcher's decision to send the Royal Marines to the Falkland Islands after they were invaded by Argentinian forces in 1982. The band believed that she had deliberately ignored the possibility of a diplomatic solution and opted to retake the territory by force, whipping the nation into a nationalistic fervour in the process to her own political gain. It was after this in 1983 that she won her second general election to remain as Prime Minister. The lyrical profile produced by the majority of British punk rock was the antithesis of almost everything Thatcher stood for, challenging even her most fundamental beliefs such as the idea of the family as the core element of British society coupled with her claims that she disliked "shrill" feminism.

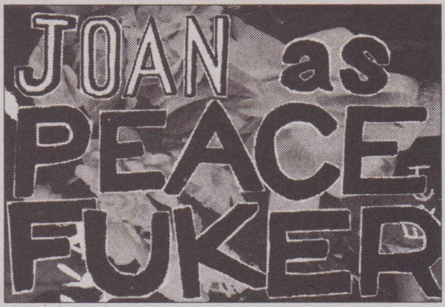
As a challenge to this bands, again including CRASS in particular, produced strongly feminist material in order to challenge her core ideals and propagate the notion of a fairer society. The key effect of these lyrical attacks was to encourage insurrection amongst their youthful audience. The impact of these seemingly insignificant challenges can never be underestimated as a means to impart a world view onto a disenchanted youth. The same thing can be seen in the Britain of today with the rapid rise of Jeremy Corbyn's brand of new socialism, being supported and spread in part through the nation's music scene. However in the 1980s there was the issue of conflicting beliefs with regard to voting with the youth being turned away from engaging in the normal operation of democracy. This is in spite of their encouraged desire to oust Thatcher. In short they hated Thatcher but didn't want to vote, realistically they were fucked either way and they knew it.

More direct than the lyrical challenges were the benefit gigs held by punk groups throughout Britain. Along with the "Rock Against Racism" movement there was also a "Rock Against Thatcher" movement. These benefit gigs were played by the likes of VICE SQUAD who made their first record deal in the wake of one such event. Aside from stirring up anti-Thatcher feelings, these gigs served to raise funds for activists to use to challenge Thatcher's regime. In a similar vein punk groups in the UK also held benefits to raise money for British coal miners in 1984. As part of her austerity measures Thatcher had turned her axe to the state owned coal industry, cutting countless jobs. This was, in her defense, widely deemed to be necessary as British coal was no longer a viable large scale industry. The issue came, however, when the miners went on strike, cutting Britain's coal supply and leading to dwindling stockpiles on which the country ran. Thatcher's response to this was less than sympathetic and has become known as the Battle of Orgreave. The "battle" broke out between striking miners and horse-mounted police officers resulting in the police conducting a mounted charge on the miners who had seen fit (understandably) to arm themselves with blunt implements. As Thatcher was busy beating Britain's working class into submission, punk groups were occupied with raising funds to help support the miners and their families.

Similar to the lyrical attacks was the published material, artwork and graffiti that bands produced. This included works like PENNY RIMBAUD's *The Last Of The Hippies* which was released along with CRASS' *Christ The Album*. This was a ten page essay about a range of issues from the meaning and purpose of rock to Marx, America, and anarchy. He made the point that rock in general wasn't about some tired stereotypes of working class and middle class or racial boundaries or differences of sex, it was the assault on those barriers. The idea was to free everyone from outdated preconceptions. He also attacked Marx and leaders of the Oi movement for romanticising working class life without having done a day's labour in their lives. Furthermore, he passed judgement on the politicians of the day from Thatcher to Michael Foot (the then leader of the British Labour Party) to Reagan. This essay represented more than the front of the booklet it's contained in would suggest. *A Series Of Shock Slogans And Mindless Token Tantrums* seems more a satirical name based upon people's preconceptions of punk rockers, *The Last Of The Hippies* was in fact informed and based in reality. It was a means of educating its readers as much as making them angry. Added to this was the trend of stencilling slogans onto walls and public buildings. This was actively encouraged by a number of bands and was another form of spreading the punk message and subverting Thatcher's government, and making concrete Britain a little more interesting. More visually striking was the artwork that British punk produced, such as a collage picture of Thatcher holding a giant turd surrounded by the slogan: "Birds put the turd in custard but who put the shit in no. 10?"

As a final testament to the power of subcultural subversion the challenges of anarcho-punks, CRASS actually made it into British politics. To begin with there was what became known as the "Thatchergate" tape. This tape was made by recording band member Eve Libertine as Thatcher and American *Red Dwarf* actor John Sharian as Reagan and editing the tape to make a disjointed conversation about the Falklands conflict. As nonsensical as the conversation was, it was edited in the same way that the KGB at the time were editing forged tapes and sounded like it just might be one such Soviet fake. In fact it sounded so much like one that it briefly fooled the CIA, the State Department and MI5 after being anonymously circulated around Europe. The conversation on the tape had "Reagan" questioning "Thatcher" over her decision to send men to die in the Falklands rather than take the peaceful option laid out before her. By this means CRASS found themselves in the papers on both sides of the Atlantic, once the authorities realised they were the culprits. In the same year (1982) CRASS released a single entitled "How Does It Feel (To Be The Mother Of A Thousand Dead)?" attacking Thatcher again over her decision to send troops to the Falklands. The record sold over 20,000 copies but the real publicity came when the late Member of Parliament Tam Dalyell raised the name of the single in the weekly session of Prime Minister's Questions, which was radio broadcast across Britain on the BBC. Dalyell asked Thatcher if she had heard the record live on air for the country to hear, this was added to the fact that he was in personal communication with her at the time regarding the issue of the Falklands as he, like many others, believed she had sent men to die for political gain, oil, and a lucrative housing contract.

The underlying importance of all these seemingly naive, adolescent challenges is that they helped inspire resistance to a growing culture of authoritarianism. Through various guises British punk rockers were able to give a voice and a reason to thousands of young men and women who were unable to find theirs through conventional politics. Such voices are still hugely important today as unfortunately the same is true. The younger generation of today's Britain has in the last decade or so been repeatedly stripped of the societal benefits which were afforded to their parents' generation by a political class that is out of touch, aged and redundant. Punk rock has provided this voice of information and resistance before and continues to do so, though sadly on a much smaller scale. It can only be hoped that in a world of Brexit, Trump, and the refusal of Theresa May to release her clawed clutch on Britain and Thatcher's legacy that political punk rock makes a resurgence to once again become a noticeable thorn in the side of those who wish for nothing but power and profit.



I could not have chosen a more turbulent time to move. As I am writing this, the Caribbean islands and parts of Florida are beginning their relief efforts to rebuild the damage dealt by Hurricane Irma. Mexico is working hard to fix the damage caused by Hurricane Katia as well as the earthquake that hit the southernmost part of the country. Houston and the surrounding areas are still rehabilitating themselves from the damage created by Hurricane Harvey. Throughout the Northwestern US, wildfires are rapidly spreading and ravaging large chunks of land. On top of this, there was the Charlottesville white nationalist rally, which resulted in many injuries and the death of Heather Heyer. This in turn directly influenced the far-right to mobilize in San Francisco and Berkeley. All of these (mostly) unrelated events are tied together by violence. Growing up in Florida, I know from firsthand experience the destruction that a hurricane can bring. In even a "mild" (if such a thing exists) hurricane, the winds and rain are often so strong that they are able to devastate entire communities. Trees falling on people's houses, power outages, and flooding can completely hinder people's ability to get by. The devastation of the three hurricanes that hit Mexico, Texas, the Caribbean, and Florida will take months to fully repair—and that is assuming that no other hurricanes will hit those areas. Likewise, both of the massive fires in the Pacific Northwest and the earthquake in Mexico have wreaked havoc in the areas they have afflicted. At least 45 people lost their lives to the earthquake in Mexico, and hundreds of thousands of acres of land are now charred from the fires. And yet despite the displacement, injury, and death that all of these natural events caused, many people do not view these massive forces of nature as acts of violence. No, the only recent major events that people repeatedly call violent are the protests that occurred in the Bay Area.

Many people involved with the August Bay Area protests (on the left at least) were doing so despite the violence of the Berkeley protests earlier in the year, where people were assaulted and private property was destroyed. Some of these activists were hoping that the August counter-demonstrations against the white nationalists would be mostly nonviolent. For example: during the preparations for these protests, I heard someone insist that violence should be avoided at all costs. Perhaps they were fearful of endangering themselves, or perhaps it was out of a commitment towards pacifism. Either way, this person absolutely refused to take part in any protest unless they knew it would be absolutely peaceful. Everybody present awkwardly danced around the subject; several people shrugged, and multiple people said they would only resort to violence in self-defense. It was obvious that the person pursuing nonviolence was displeased by these answers, but they were satisfied enough to allow the conversation to drift elsewhere. This conversation is not unique: people everywhere have been debating about whether there is any virtue to violent protesting.

The demand for nonviolence on that particular day made some people uncomfortable because most people present believed that either they themselves or people they knew would be victims of violence if the far-right had their way. The threat against all disadvantaged groups from the US government is incredibly great right now, but so also is the threat from right-wing *provocateurs* such as Richard Spencer and Joey Gibson. Many among the far-left as well as many anarchists consider their actions and words, such as Milo Yiannopoulos' planned but undelivered speech at UC Berkeley to out undocumented students, as tantamount to violence. And their actions certainly are, as they both normalize and provoke racism, sexism, ableism, transphobia, and homophobia among other bigoted beliefs. And yet the largest criticism levied against groups protesting the alt-right, such as antifa, is that they are using violence to prevent these people from using their right to free speech. This criticism insists that the radical left prevents the alt-right from ever expressing their ideals, and that by engaging in violence, the radical left mirrors the ideology of the far right. Some people even assert that violent protests are a large part of why Donald Trump won the election.

"So why not debate them?" Debate with alt-right people often rapidly devolves into debating concepts that should not be debated. Many far-right or alt-right agents will steadfastly assert bogus notions such as the following: women are not oppressed; people of color / Black people do not experience institutional racism (to say nothing of microaggressions!); there are only two genders, etc. These notions are all in opposition to facts that can be readily proven in a number of easily accessible ways such as reading an encyclopedia, talking with various underprivileged people, or even casually (and with an unbiased eye) observing the interactions of people around you. These ideas all stem from, and buttress, their ideology that some people (mostly people unlike themselves) are essentially fundamentally inferior and deserve to be treated as less than human (if they are allowed to live at all). Ideas like these are the core of their worldview and unlikely to change if debated in a peaceful manner. If you wish to try it out on your own, feel free! You can find a plethora of alt-right people on Reddit. If you are fortunate enough, you may also run across someone who prioritizes the free speech of these alt-right / white supremacist groups over the safety and wellbeing of other people. Have fun! Let me know how your debate goes.

Instead of peaceful arguing, I believe that violence is the only answer to the growing tide of far-right white nationalism. However, we need to reconsider what we believe violence to be and understand the different ways that our actions may create violence. Despite what one's gut might say, violence does not have to be physically harmful to another person. On the contrary, some of the most effective means of nonviolent protests *have* been violent. Some of the most famous nonviolent protesters in the world, such as Thích Quang Đuc, depended on forcing violence upon their own bodies in a hope to garner sympathy from their enemies. Some groups, such as the Black Lives Matter protesters, commit economic violence by shutting down roadways and slowing down the capitalist process in their cities (which is the main reason why there is so much legislation to make such protesting illegal). Or in an even more recent example of violent nonviolence, look at the protest in Boston. Thousands of people completely surrounded a much smaller group of far-right activists and made them drastically change their protest plans. As evidenced by tweets sent out by alt-right protesters, the "free speech" march was canceled more so due to the threat of potential violence above anything else.

And speaking of recontextualizing violence, we should also consider just what the free speech of alt-right people entails. We can easily make the logical leap that much of their speech is the same as violence because of the sheer nature of their ideology. Nobody in the alt-right has made even the slightest attempt to hide the direct ties to white nationalism—you can read about it in any article about Richard Spencer. Their ideology relies exclusively on violence to people who are inferior to / weaker than them, including non-whites, queers, and differently abled people among others. Their rallies and speeches thus are inherently acts of violence because their goal is to restrict the basic human rights of others different than themselves. Furthermore, their other goal in these rallies and marches is to spread their ideology to others. One of their goals, to use a liberal phrase, is to "normalize" this particular brand of white nationalism and to make the ideas they hold acceptable in the public eye again.

Can you then blame violent protesters for their actions? A segment of the demonstrators are people fighting for survival. Many of the people fighting against the alt-right at the protests in the Bay Area and elsewhere throughout the country are made up of the very same people the alt-right would conspire to murder. The times that they turned to violence were often in self-defence of themselves, or in defense of others. This is not conjecture, this is fact. Fascists have already killed one protester and maimed many others, how long until another is killed?

Without the presence of a threat of violence, nonviolent protests, such as the one advocated for by the person I mentioned above, are completely ineffective in these situations and only force other people to behave violently on your behalf. For example: if you wish to protest nonviolently, and you or people near you are attacked by the police or by white nationalists, then what good will nonviolence do? In the words of Stokely Carmichael, "In order for nonviolence to work, your opponent must have a conscience." Given that the alt-right's ideology is dependent on dehumanizing others to the point of extinction, it is foolish to expect that a passive, unorganized, form of nonviolence will cause a change of heart in any member of the alt-right. If a pacifist were attacked by a white nationalist, one would only hope that other people, the *very* people whom you ideologically disagree with, would step in and fight off the neo-Nazis that are beating your ass. Is that truly pacifism? Is it really peaceful? Does this create a situation of nonviolence? The answer is a loud and resounding *no*.

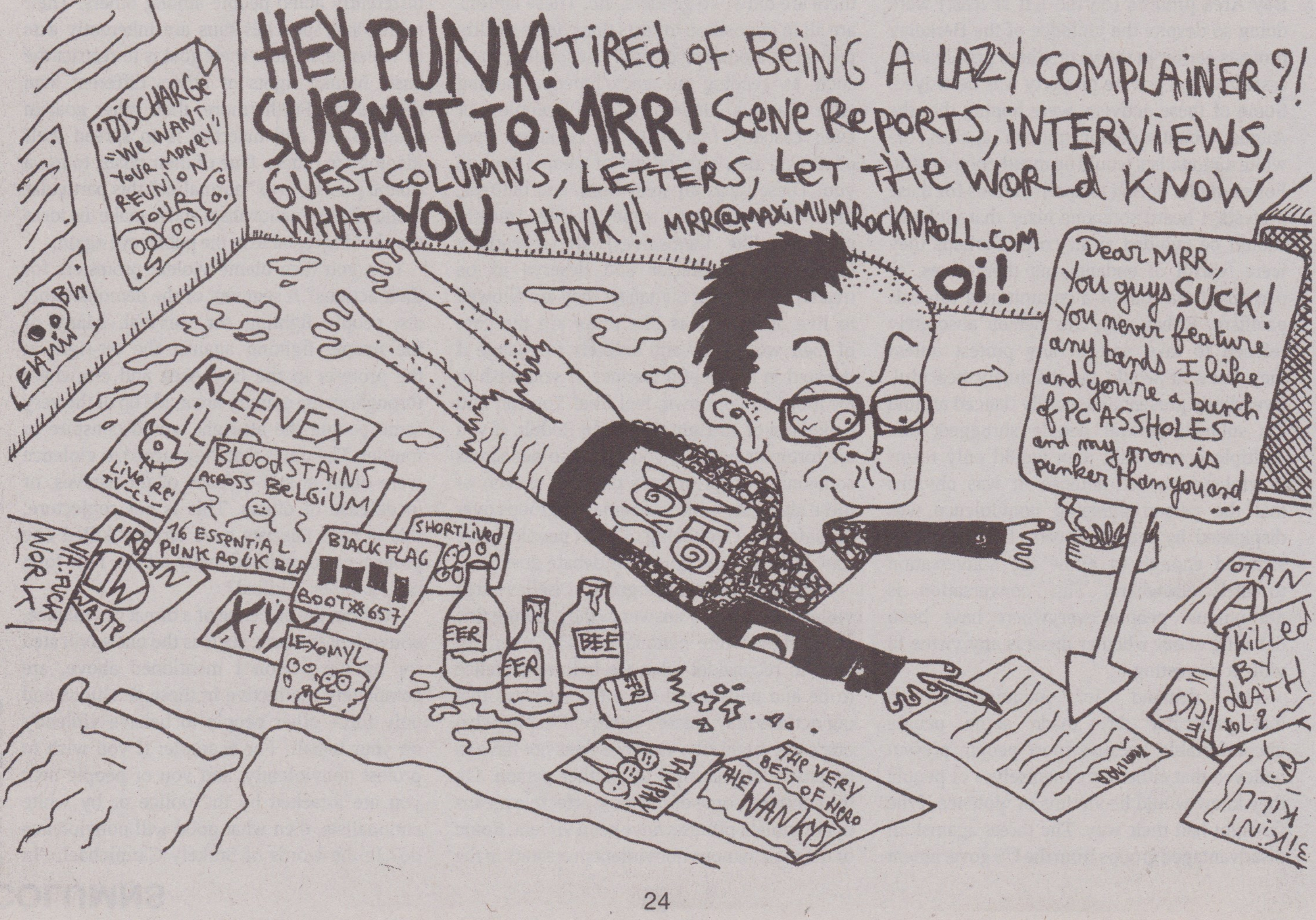
(As a side note: there are totally instances where people are incapable of self-defense. I am not talking about those people here, nor would I ever disparage anybody if they must be nonviolent due to age, ability, or any other such thing. The presence of these people at protests, as well as their own resistance movements, is immensely valuable. I am talking here about people who are capable of violent resistance but insist upon using nonviolent means.)

The nonviolent participant in these rallies is akin to a liberal's response to our capitalist crisis, and are just as out of place in these protests as they are in the broader scale of resistance to capitalism. Now that we have, in the words of Ta-Nehisi Coates, the "first white president," whose election was largely driven by racists afraid of Black people and other POC, the ties between white nationalism, the American state, and the national executive arm of the government (the police) are laid clearer than ever. Totally passive nonviolence has no recourse against it. What will nonviolence do against police brutality? What will nonviolence do against the exploitation of workers? What will nonviolence do about rampant sexism? We saw just how effective the Women's March was at changing the conversation about systematic change—it wasn't. We have seen how voting has changed the fundamental rights that people have in America—it hasn't. The change that we have seen over the course of American history did not come through peaceful engagement with democracy, but rather through the organized and often violent will of the people. It was through the economic violence of striking of workers that we now enjoy eight hour work days; it was through numerous riots that queers began to gain their civil rights; it was through consistent civil disobedience (often using indirect violence) that Black people were able to prove their humanity to a largely uncaring government. The government usually acts to protect the people it has discriminated against only if it feels that its institutions are threatened.

The entirety of American history is beset in violence against people that are different from themselves. Americans, in their quest for expansion and capital, have slaughtered the majority of First Peoples, enslaved millions, and have caused endless turmoil abroad. The government assaults its own people as well. DACA hopes to deport people who have only known the United States, an act of violence. Congress hopes to dismantle the ADA, an act of violence, as it would make access to resources for disabled people much harder. In a number of legislative acts, the current legislation has rolled back environmental protects, which is again, an act of violence. In the face of these acts of violence and many others, our only option should be to give violence a chance, even if that violence is in a form that may not resemble violence at first glance.

P.S. We at *Maximum Rocknroll* are still hiring both a design coordinator and a distro coordinator. Email us at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com to apply to be one of the people at the helm of the longest running punk magazine on the planet.

P.P.S. Brace Belden is *back*.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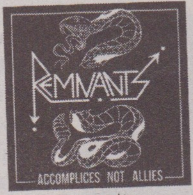

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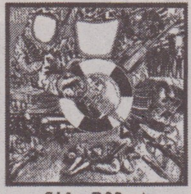

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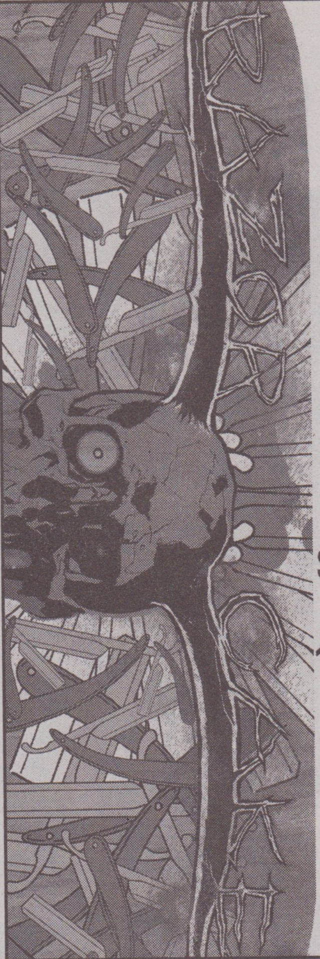

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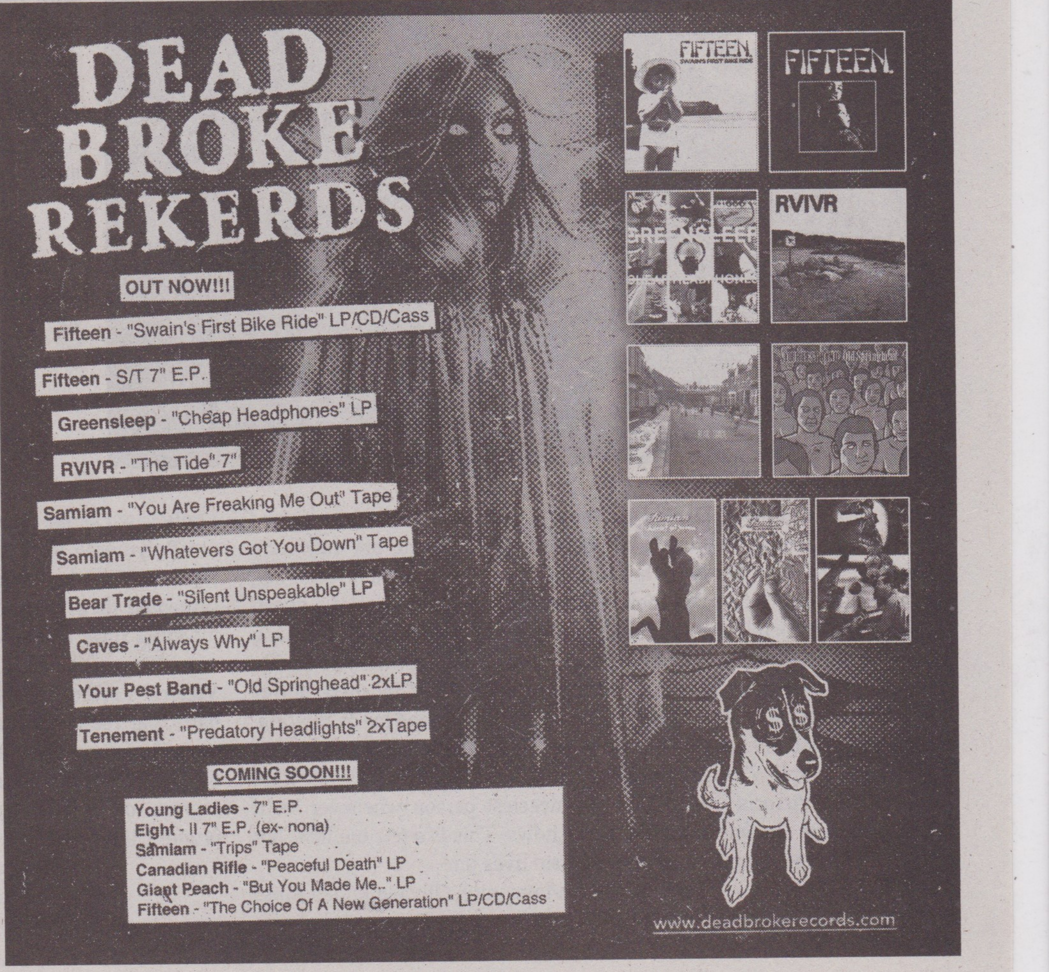

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RIP VICTORIA SCALISI

Photo: Chris Boarts Larson

Victoria Scalisi, artist and singer of Damad, Karst and Lies in Stone passed away from Colorectal cancer on August 2nd. There are people who anchor a local scene, that were there from the start and were a central force in making it happen. Victoria was that anchor and heart of that Savannah scene, and by extension, the whole down-tuned, southern crust scene of the 1990s, from her earliest band, Rogues Gallery to Damad, Karst, and her most recent band Lies In Stone. Her stage presence is iconic—brutal vocals emanating from her small frame behind her flowing, shining long hair, voice twisting to screech and cackle, bottoming out in lowest boom and gruff. Eerie, intense and intimidating with her large, piercing eyes and commanding strength…but it all belied that fact that she was a total sweetheart, a kind person fiercely committed as much to her friends and family as her art and music. She had an easy and funny laugh and retained a remarkable childlike glee and enthusiastic wonder at things that almost all people sadly slough off as they grow jaded and older.

Her music and art speaks volumes and underlines the loss, but those lucky enough to know her understand its scale. Victoria explained to me once that she loved the band name Damad because it was in balanced in either direction, and that's something critical to understanding both the band and person, There was always a balance with her, an ability to take herself seriously and not, and ability to be furiously intense and thoughtfully compassionate. I remain devastated and saddened by this loss but I understand from knowing and learning from her it's all a balance, weighted on the other side by the joy of knowing her, my memories of our conversations and enjoyment of her art and music.

— Ken Sanderson (Prank Records)

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My heart is broken. She helped me find my voice...taught me to be ferocious without apology.

—Ruby (No Statik, The Light, Scrotum Grinder)

I first saw Victoria and Damad at a show in Savannah where they opened for Dirt and Final Warning. I had never heard of them, but they were easily as good as the two "headlining" bands. I remember thinking, and I mean this as a compliment, that Victoria reminded me of a ghost. There was something very ghostly about her. I even thought she sang kind of like a ghost. I have to stress that this is a compliment. Funnily, it was like five years later that I started to see a lot of Japanese horror movies featuring "ghosts" that kind of actually reminded me of Victoria. Anyway, my band became friends with her band and I'm honored that we shared a split 7" together, even though I think my band's side kind of ruins it. Victoria was always the sweetest person whenever we'd cross paths in the world of punk rock shows. This is a terrible loss, but I am comforted by the fact that her music lives on.

—Chris Bickel (In/humanity, Guyana Punch Line)

I only saw Damad a couple of times. Once when they were on the way out Polymorph to record Rise & Fall, and totally unknown to me at the time. And the other at Gilman after they'd switched drummers and cemented their crushing sound into a perfect pounding hurricane of moaning lows and screaming howls. This band killed it live and the records have all left a lasting effect on me. Especially *Burning Cold.* Victoria's presence is such a force on all of the records but that one in particular really hit me like a ton of bricks. Hearing her voice made me truly wonder how it is that some humans can make the sounds they do and seem so at ease with their seemingly freakish talent. She had a grace to her that was so tangible and warm. She oozed it, loud and proud. I'll never forget her power.

—Jensen Ward (Iron Lung)

We had so much fun with the Damad crew when they would roll through Austin. I can remember Brian and I taking some compromising photos of Scott when he was passed out drunk, and I can still hear Victoria's wonderful laughter. I'm hearing it now and it is making me smile through the sadness. Godspeed beautiful.

—Jack Control (Butcher, Enormous Door, WB2D)

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A few weeks ago, a good friend was over at our house. We were sitting out on the porch talking and somehow the conversation turned to an old mutual friend from Savannah, GA named Victoria. My friend told me that she recently reconnected with her via internet. My friend told me also that she was very sick. Yesterday I heard that she passed away. I hadn't talked to her in years. Years. I guess we just fell off of each other's radars. Back when we were hanging out there was no social media really and a lot of friends just slipped away.

The very first time I ever played an out of town show was with my old band Audacity. We went to Savannah and played with Victoria's old band Rogues Gallery. She was our contact and when we got there she found out that we had never left Dalton, GA before and became very protective of us. Like she wanted to make sure we had a great experience! We totally did! Show was great, she bought us food, and we stayed at her place. May seem silly now, but it was the first apartment / house that I'd ever went to that had Christmas lights up in the summer. "Yeah, I like colored lights. So what?!" she said. I have hung colored lights at every place that I've ever lived since then. Time rolled on and we'd see each a couple of times a year, usually on tour (and we would watch her sing in her amazing band, Damad) or me and an old buddy, who used to be her roommate, would drive down for the weekend. I've said before that because of punk rock, I got to travel all over the country. But it was really because of her. That first time we went to Savannah, she showed us a community, a possible family that was out there...we had just realized that we weren't alone. She affected me. Thank you Victoria. I'm so sorry. Rest easy old friend. My heart goes out to all of the wonderful people who were in her life. I'm so sorry for your loss.

—Eric Nelson.

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It has been a little while since I talked to Victoria. Every now and then I would get a phone call and you would immediately know the caller. She had a one of a kind of voice. It is unreal that I will not hear her again. Yes, that voice was part of one the most forward thinking, metallic, punk outfits of the '90s into the 2000s, Damad, but it was also the voice that would excitedly tell you about whatever her artistic projects were (and she had many in all kinds of forms), catch you up on family and friends in Savannah, and whatever new thing she was into at the time. Always excited and positive! A call would always make my day a little brighter when I heard from her. Yes, she was in amazing bands and was an amazing artist but hearing her voice every now and then is what I will miss the most. Rest in peace.

—Joshua (At A Loss Recordings)

Damad were forming just as I was starting a record label, so naturally we would share some of our earliest projects. When Phillip and Victoria started to bounce ideas off one another for this new project, I was intrigued. Having seen the two of them on stage together many times before, I figured there was no better time to get more deeply involved myself. We would work together closely over the next few years—working on records, booking shows, printing t-shirts, and making things happen. Damad drew more and more kids out to shows, more bands formed, the scene began to grow and attention was being drawn to our town in a way that hadn't really happened before.

Victoria was at the heart of it all. She had such a presence on stage and a voice so incredibly powerful, it was impossible not to be awestruck. I've seen people stop dead in their tracks and turn to look back at the stage with disbelief. Her voice was larger than life, packing a punch matched only by the ones she threw with her fists. With her voice and the band's varied backgrounds and influences, Damad became sludge pioneers, creating a sound that could be heard in other bands for decades to come—a sound that Savannah would become known for. The bands that have formed here since, the scene that still exists, and the sound that carries on can all be traced back to them.

Had I not stood in a park with Vic and Phillip that one evening in 1993 and volunteered to do something I knew nothing about, I would not be who I am today. I too owe much to Damad—both as a band and, more importantly, as friends. It's difficult to put into words what it's like to lose someone who has been such a big part of helping shape you as a person and an enormous part of building something that you hold so dear. I am truly grateful for the experiences and the memories. Thank you, Victoria. Thank you for all that you've done, all that you were, and all that it meant.

—Pat (Passive Fist / Hyperrealist)

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I met Victoria when I moved to Savannah in 1992 for college. I wanted to meet new like minded friends and hopefully some folks to play music with. I had met Phillip Cope and he had introduced me to Victoria. At the time Phillip and Victoria had a band together called Rogues Gallery and they were looking for another guitarist to play in the band because Phil wanted to leave the band. I got to play with the band for a bit and then left to start another project and try to focus on school. That school year ended and I went to stay with my parents in Atlanta and find a job for the summer. I kept in contact with Victoria through mail and an occasional phone call to say hello and keep in touch.

I returned to Savannah later that summer to return to school and find work and see my friends. Around that time Phillip and Victoria were wanting to start a new band and experiment with a heavier sound. This new band would become Damad. I started playing drums with them in Autumn of 1993 and had the chance to record and release music on a 7", a split and a compilation, and tour. I was really excited to share my first touring experience with them. I remember Victoria would pack a cooler with lunch that she made for us before going into recording sessions. Healthy sandwiches and snacks. She was like a den mother. Like the kind of den mother that punches you in the arm real hard and then laughs at you. She was fun to write music with, skate with, play shows, travel and just hang out. She was good people.

Victoria was an amazing visual artist as well; her style of drawing these crazy, surreal figures and creatures was awesome. I remember bugging her about doing art shows so people could see her paintings and she would get so shy about it. There was a part of her that always seemed a bit guarded or cautious about letting people see her creations, but like the music, when she put on a show and allowed you to see her creativity in action it was like a force.

I moved away from Savannah in 1996 but anytime I would go back I would always try to see her or talk with her. She would always genuinely ask how I was doing and would make time to talk. It always seemed like no matter how much time had passed between getting to see or email or phone call, we could easily pick up where we left off. I feel grateful to have had her as a bandmate, fellow artist, and friend.

—Chris Parry (Damad, Tank 18)

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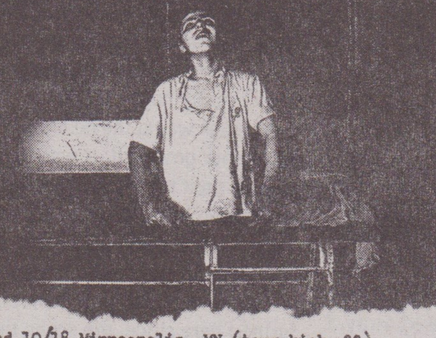

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Tue 10/24 New Haven, CT @ TBA
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Thu 10/26 Pittsburgh, PA @ Gooski's with Pigs Bleed
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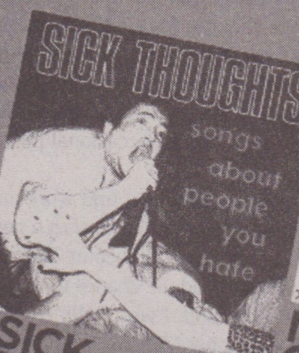

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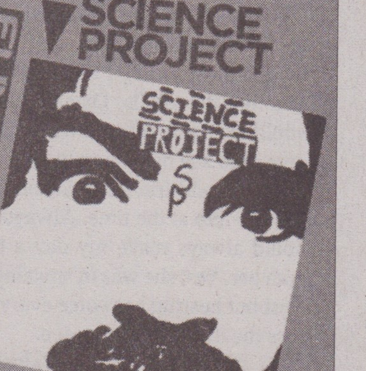

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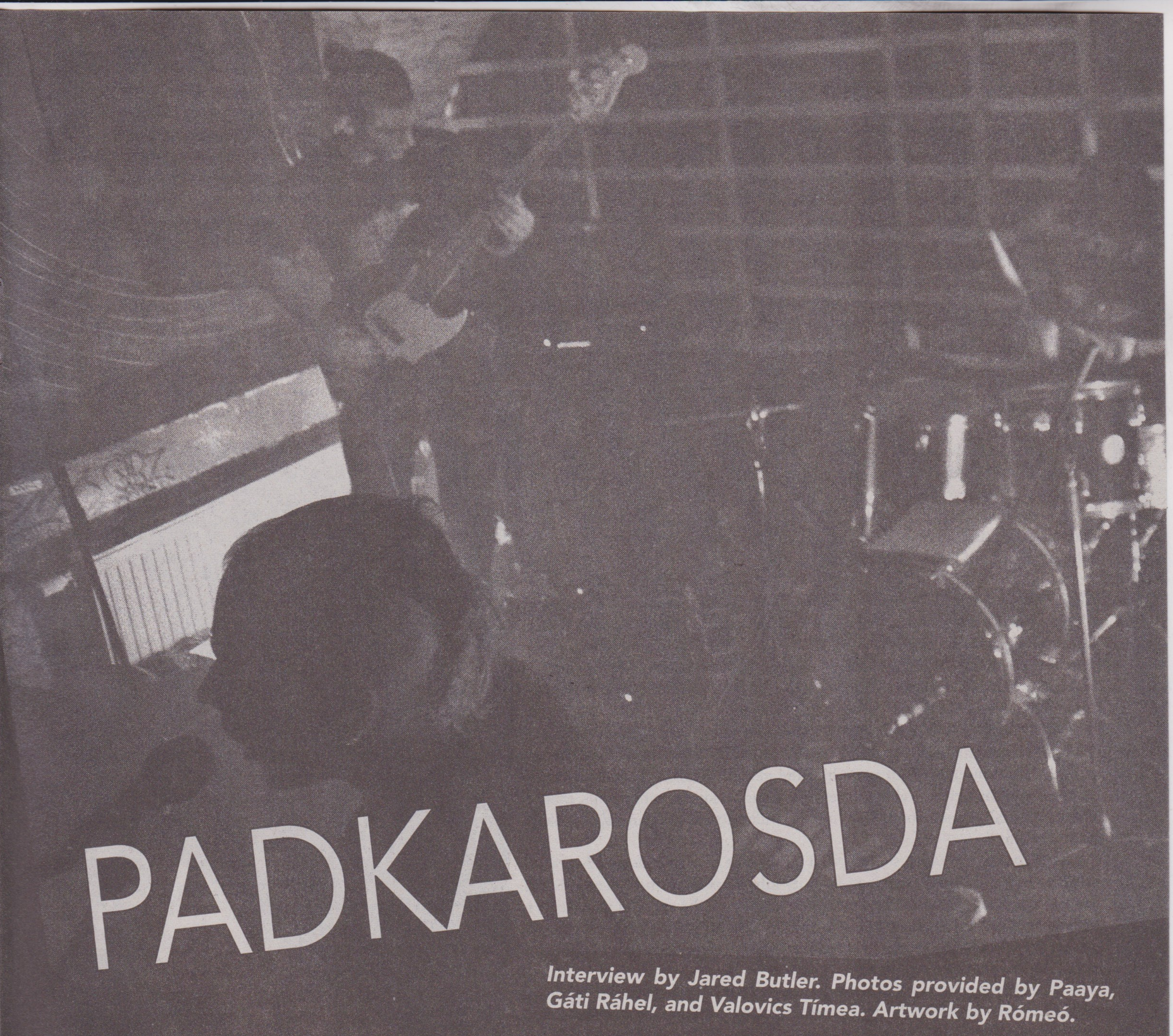


PADKAROSDA

Interview by Jared Butler. Photos provided by Paaya, Gáti Ráhel, and Valovics Tímea. Artwork by Rómeó.

MRR: So you're all from different parts of Hungary / Transylvania. How did Padkarosda even form?

Rómeó: Padkarosda was formed in Pécs in the southwest of Hungary in 2009. At that time the members were Gergõ Laki, Bence Gallyas, and myself. After recording the first album, Bence quit and Gergõ Vitéz from Budapest, who we knew from the band Witkin, joined as the drummer. Since then the band has been based in Budapest. After making the second album, *Szabadulásom Mûvészete*, Gergõ Laki left the band, and Viktor Böcskey took his place. The third album, *Tétova Lelkek* was recorded with this lineup.

MRR: The lyrics explore themes of solitude, alienation, an impersonal universe, and human weakness. Do you think expressing yourself this way helps you feel better, or is it more about mining these themes of intense emotions to give them life?

Rómeó: There is no need for me to to explain it. Someone who writes a poem does it to express something and to feel better through the act of writing it. When writing lyrics, I try to exaggerate and enlarge specific concepts and situations, or to blend them together to intensify the mood. It's something which I think makes our music more intense and expresses our ideology.

MRR: Is anyone else in your families also into art and music?

Rómeó: My parents made art. I studied painting. The idea of making music came with punk.

Viktor: My grandpa used to play a few instruments, but that's all.

MRR: You guys have put a lot of effort into your gear settings which together with the lyrics, art, and the songs themselves make a really consistent and vivid atmosphere. Did it take long to find your sound? Would anyone here consider themselves a gearhead?

Rómeó: The sound and the way we play has built itself up and is still a work in progress. Instead of playing the usual rock'n'roll guitar-based music, the concept was to play bass-driven punk. The idea was to have squirming guitar laid on the bulkiness of the bass. I think the style of the sound and the lyrics really came together on *Szabadulásom Mûvészete*, so that's the one that I consider our actual first album. So once the the bass was set, we wanted a distorted, mechanical stream that sounded weird and built up from many tones. I tried to shape the guitar sound to fit the lyrics. It needed to be cold and phlegm-y, like an worn-out ghost tape. The drums are different. They developed with Tétova Lelkek, and will be put more in the foreground on the next recording.

The illustrations, themes, and lyrics are one in the same for me. They influence each other. Sometimes I write lyrics and music inspired by a painting I made, other times I try to base paintings off lyrics. For me, these things happen to form naturally from each other, I don't put any separate energy into creating them.

Gergõ: The idea was to keep the live sound from our sessions. The characteristic guitar sound was Rómeó's idea. I did the studio recording, mixing, and mastering.

Viktor: I consider the whole process as a living and evolving thing. Regarding the songs, Rómeó shows us a new melody, or a few notes, which creates a special atmosphere. Afterwards Gergõ and me fill it up with content. Sometimes I don't like the new ideas, but after a few sessions the songs can change so radically that I like the end results. I think the sound didn't change so much in the past years, if anything, it just got more conscious and mature.

MRR: *Tétova Lelkek* is a more patient, atmospheric installment compared to your guys' earlier albums. What spurred the shift in that direction? What should we expect from the next?

Viktor: If members of a band change, it affects the music. Gergõ drummed on *Szabadulásom Muvészete*, and I joined in before *Tétova Lelkek*. But it's not the only reason that our sound changed.

Rómeó: *Tétova Lelkek* was made almost three years after *Szabadulásom Mûvészete*. We didn't want to make the same kind of album; we had different melodies in our heads. I think slower songs fit more into the morally declining world we evoke. The themes of the lyrics are about the events of our personal environments, evoked as metaphorical phenomenon. They need a wider atmosphere and space, like a deserted plain.

Szabadulásom Mûvészete started with a concept which collects Hungarian problems into a fictional city along with its inhabitants and their mental issues. This concept is taken further in *Tétova Lelkek*, although the anger of realization is missing, everyone is resigned to their fate. With some irony, they try to figure out in what way they're involved in the system. In every song there are references to previous ones.

As for our next album, tribal rhythms are going to dominate in our upcoming songs. They will represent those who are devolving out from civilization. People who try to flee into nature.

Gergõ: Before *Tétova Lelkek* was written, Rómeó's basic ideas and lyrics had already been more melancholic and darker than in previous songs. We also experimented a lot during recording. After we finished recording, I worked for half a year on the album sound. The sound will be more restrained on the next album. But in its atmosphere, it will be similar to Tétova Lelkek.

MRR: Aside from the occasional show, you guys stay relatively unconnected to the larger punk scene in Budapest. Is this intentional? Is it due to your location? Or is it punk politics at work?

Rómeó: It's partly because of where we live. I would say that when we started playing in Budapest around 2010, we were playing totally different music than most of the hardcore / punk bands at the time, and definitely different from what the scene was used to. We never expected to be invited up [to Budapest]. Nonetheless we organized enough shows where we tried to involve bands from Budapest that we liked, for example Tumo, Witkin, Fuseism. Otherwise, we made close connections with bands from Szeged, who we had more in common with, like the band A Párt.

Over the years, we sometimes had two to three shows a month, which is a lot for here. We like to work with the dark punk scene, often getting invited to play with touring bands, and even to play art exhibitions. We're happy about any invitation we get, but it has always been in our nature to not to get boxed into any specific community. In this sense we are outsiders, but this is a positive thing because we can communicate with all kinds of people. So this is, in a way, our punk politics.

Recently we have been organizing with a friend of ours, which has influenced the show bills to move into a more post-punk / dark punk direction. So the audience tends to be very diverse; often new people come who later become regulars at our shows. We try to get to know them. So we're an active punk band compared to those bands who go home to sleep after shows because they need to wake up early for work. For us, it is very important to put effort into making new connections and familiarizing ourselves with new perspectives from other people.

MRR: None of you have ever struck me as staunch nationalists, but is there anything that you think is particularly Hungarian about your music?

Viktor: The feeling of Hungarian suburbs. Aside from that, there's nothing typically Hungarian about it.

Rómeó: The lyrics make the music particularly Hungarian. When we are abroad they say that different motifs that we use are only found past the iron curtain. In Serbia they say we sound like an old local band…but there are no folklore elements in our music

MRR: As far as I know, your lyrics are always more about broader abstract concepts, and you never directly sing about anything topical. But do you think the concepts you chose reflect those which are particularly relevant in this day and age, or do you think about them as more "timeless" than anything else?

Rómeó: We don't write these songs to be timeless. It never interested me to write about those themes already explored by other punk bands. Our songs are about how social norms deform ordinary life. And from this, parallel universes are generated in people's minds. Every ideology is a paradox. We try to explore these problems and phenomena; we magnify and supplement them. We want to invoke a flow of thought about what you would see if you walked through the streets of Hungary and could see into the people's mind.

Viktor: Most of the themes are in fact relevant in this age. They are inspired by today's happenings, they are an interpretations of the age we are living in.
Gergõ: I think our lyrics are relevant in this day and age. They also have a menacing sense of future, so in that way they are timeless.

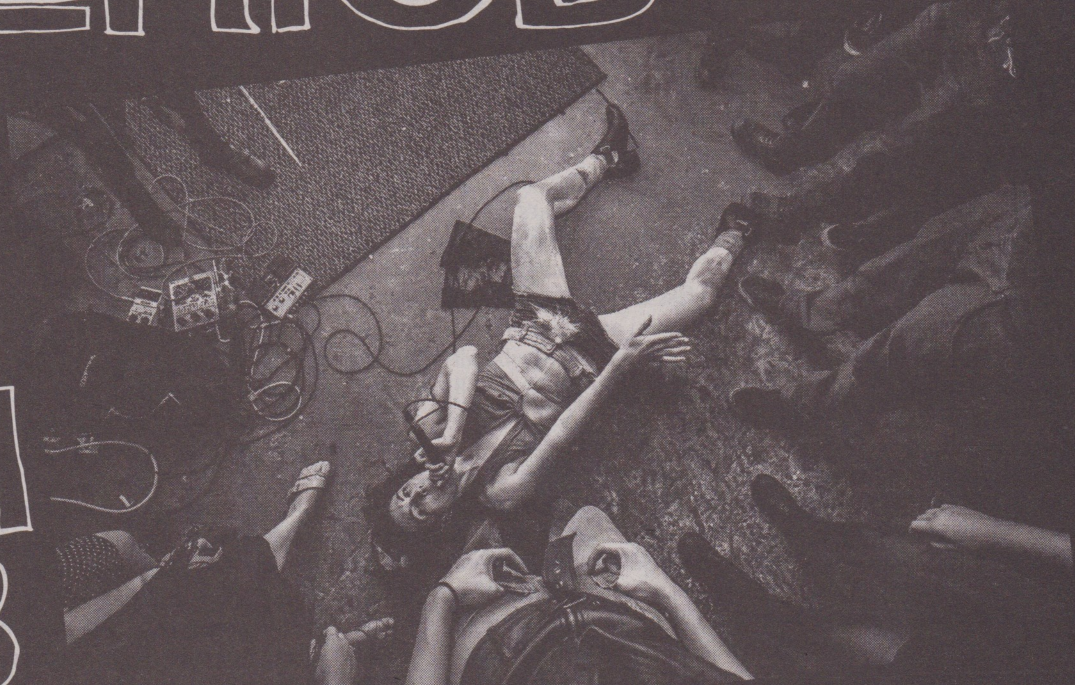
MRR: Hungarians like to say that, because of its unique and more freeform grammar, your language is one of the world's best for poetry. Do you agree that something about Hungarian allows for particularly good prose and lyrics? Or is it just something they like to say since foreigners can't really confirm or deny it?
Rómeó: I like writing Hungarian lyrics, but it's very hard to write good ones. And since I don't speak any other language on a perfect level, I can't compare it. Although I do see that as our lyrics get translated, they get simplified. Special details disappear which were essential in conveying the mood. The "why" I wrote them for, the substance, is missing from the English versions.
Gergõ: Hungarian is a literary language so it's very difficult to write good lyrics. Of course we write best in Hungarian, because we can more closely identify with lyrics in our own language, but we hope that more people can identify with them now that they've been translated.
Viktor: In my opinion the language is excellent for poetry. We have a lot of different consonants and vowels. You can play not only with the meaning, but the intonation of the language, the short and long vowels and consonants create a special sound and melody. What do you think Jared? You speak Hungarian and you translated the lyrics of *Tětova Lelkek* to English. What do you say? Was it easy to do so?

MRR: Well no, but it was fucking fun. And I'm also not without bias cause I probably romanticize the language too. I do think there are some things which stand out. Hungarian feels a lot "thinner" than English; you can say a lot more with a lot less. In that sense it's a naturally pithy language, and that's a great quality for writing.

You guys have been all up and down Central and Eastern Europe, what's the weirdest thing you've seen while touring?
Gergõ: The time when we stayed in this place which looked like a big death house in Belgrade. It was filled with cats, lots of trash, old unusable things, and a Gothic fireplace. Everything smelled like wet clothes and cat shit. This guy with long hair and long fingernails lived there...it was weird but the guy was very kind. The place reminded us of horror novels.
Viktor: Last Autumn we were passing by Prague. Laying in the middle of the highway was a corpse without a head. There were no police or ambulance on the scene yet, but a few cars were stopping to look. Everyone looked really scared and confused. It must have happened shortly before our arrival. We didn't know where he had come from either. Maybe he had jumped down from the pedestrian bridge, or he was trying to cross the highway by foot and got hit and decapitated under a wheel...
Rómeó: Besides these things, It was weird the way people abroad were so open to us and music with Hungarian language. There was an unexpected interest in what we do.

padkarosda.bandcamp.com

PERIOD BOMB



Interview by Brenna Bleeder. Photos by Jim Hall and Nebbie Loon.

We talk to Period Bomb (or is it Queeried Bomb?) about their bohemian lifestyle, what it means to be DIY, and their breakfast cereal.

MRR: What in the world would motivate a woman to squeeze a used tampon onto her face during a live set? What does your period mean to you, both personally and politically, and how have crowds responded to your wacky menstrual antics?

CamBam Boom: Girl, the last time I used a tampon it was for a nosebleed. I got really disgusted by them when I had this cervical cancer scare and I thought I was just gonna die in my van 'cause it was after my first tour and every cent had already gone into music...But I'll tell you just coming of age as a woman in any place I've lived in in America the last decade is definitely enough to turn anyone into a very angry feminist and want / need to rub that stuff all over innocent people's faces.

It's outrageous that some people today think feminism is no longer a worthy cause or that we don't suffer severe injustices anymore. It definitely has to evolve to include and gain strength from queer people from all over the spectrum, but the idea that a woman could be stronger or wiser or better at doing anything than a man is still seen as so radical everywhere in America and heteronormative relationships still default to being dominated by men. I still can't even turn on the TV without seeing a man making a woman suffer and no one batting an eye. There's a line in one of my new songs called "Tongues In Cheeks" about how we still have to be coy anytime we speak up for ourselves to not have our opinions and complaints totally disregarded. In fact I think I can totally turn that song into a duet...I'm going to send it to you right now! [*laughter*]

MRR: That sounds great, I'd be so honored to be a part of it! It really is ridiculous how people still don't seem to take women's oppression seriously, even in "progressive" or "alternative" subcultures. What are your thoughts on that? How would you like to see feminism expressed in the DIY community?

CamBam: I think the real issue with the subcultures and America in general right now is classism. Of course women and minorities can be oppressed at home or in the workplace no matter how much money they have but in poorer communities it's just so much more severe and present that we're always on the defense. Then when I visit these young "progressive" socialite communities it really seems like they are only going to really fight against something they may have been guilty of in the past and still feel guilty about such as racism. It seems like they don't believe in the class divide or see anything wrong with thinking of their girlfriends as subordinates. It's really hard to get through to men like this. I feel like it is my duty to confront them when they are at my show, without getting cut off or talked over. I try to avoid getting really mad and deemed as crazy...Quite frankly I don't know what the heck to do about them other than try and constantly remind them in vivid detail that they are not even truly communicating with *anyone* or considering *anyone* they speak to as equals unless they are going to take a second to actually imagine that person's perspective in that moment. People are living more and more in a vacuum and I'm totally guilty of that myself. I think that's fine if you are making some kind of really unique art out of it in the end. However, if you are living a comfortable life and think that there is nothing you can or should do about the class divide, but without ever putting yourself in other people's shoes you are being a con-artist pretending to give a shit about anyone you talk to! Maybe all of us oppressed people talking about this online and out loud will change some people.

MRR: I totally agree that classism plays a big part. it seems like a lot of the DIY community is made up of young, privileged college students or college-educated young adults who don't make an effort to fully understand how oppression works. It seems you've had plenty of bad experiences with sexist promoters and stuff like that, so it makes sense that you'd want to be as independent as possible. I really admire the fact that you do all your own booking, make your own merch, and run Crass Lips Records with Gladys Nobriga. What else does DIY mean to you?

CamBam: It cracks me up just how heated the discussion over what's DIY (similar to what's punk) gets around these kinds of communities. If there is one word that everyone would agree to describe Period Bomb it's "expressive." Everyone picks up on that. Now, when someone comes up to me after a show and asks "Hey, who writes the music?" or "Who makes all this super DIY looking merch for you?" or "Who does your booking / managing?" Or worst of all "Who wrote *your* lyrics?" I can't help but get deeply upset. It shows they either didn't pick up on one word we were just expressing or they do not have any understanding of how oppression works or fail to acknowledge it is real and not just something actors act out. I know poor artists rarely get media attention but these people really think *actually* broke artists don't exist? We and others like us have no choice but to do our best art with just stuff we've found or been given and try and travel around selling them to get by. And they are accusing me of being an actor! Which to me is the greatest insult. I think Period Bomb is just too real for these people to handle. They can talk about how bad they felt for a character on a TV show (who is most likely white and well-off) but they really cannot compute that these people dressed in shredded dirty clothes that they perceive as girls actually have no money in their bank accounts and that they are here, on another several month-long tour, expressing themselves and selling handmade items to get by. And no, we don't want to give you a handmade tape in exchange for your wonderful business advice to "get a manager." Any person like this I confront or inadvertently make feel uncomfortable can never seem to face it and just apologize. Men almost always have to interpret it as if I want to get in a fight and that I should just take their advice and hire someone better at selling merch. Or they'll say just "Relax and smile more."

But to finally answer your question...DIY to me means not buying into the American lie that you have to have money to make money, and that nothing is free. Are you kidding? Just about anything you could possibly ever want can be found *for free* in an American dumpster...and there are still tons of strong actual DIY communities in America that live like kings and queens off them! I've lived completely off reclaimed food, clothes, people's generosity and some food stamps for at least five years now. To put it in perspective I'd say I've slept on couches about 85% of these past four years. I have gone to so many emergency clinics to try and get anyone anywhere to pull my rotten wisdom teeth out for actually nothing upfront....years of suffering later I found someone to yank 'em for free because he actually knew my parents and that I really didn't have anything to give. I knew even before I quit my cafe job and moved into a bus that I was going to spend at least the rest of my time pursuing music like this and I don't regret a minute of it! It works differently for other people but I think all real artists in America are oppressed. Even if they are rich, they still have to make art that pleases capitalists to have any value here! But I have lived in DIY communities in L.A. where the opposite is true, and I can say that for pretty much all the real DIY communities we play. The International Noise Conference and the noise scene in Miami, Oakland, Salt Lake City, St. Louis, Brooklyn, and Chicago have been particularly supportive of us and our kind. And the Cold Spring Hollow in Western Mass and of course the Spaghetti House's catalog of crazy shows are really something legendary! And Nick who runs Dispuppy in Lexington...[They] are all really noteworthy members of the DIY fleet to me because these are also communities where one or two bands there really broke through

musically and were motivated enough to not only book tours but also book tons of other touring bands at their own home when they weren't touring. For the most part these people are actually valued in these communities! I've seen it where they are in a crisis or they just couldn't get it together between tours to take care of something vital and they throw a benefit show and everyone's there giving like *It's A Wonderful Life*! I think they do it for the community almost more than for themselves because they value it more than anything. It's just not as fun gaining acclaim without friends and lovers gaining it with you. I think we are all kind of romantics in that way even though we are total cynics about everything else. Seriously, when are more people going to stop buying into the false notion that everything you see is bought and sold and start harnessing a different reality within us? I think another thing we all have in common is we want to share the DIY bounty with as many people as possible and do not care if an opportunity presents itself that is corporate and un-punk...all the more reason to spread our message there. Plus most of us are in fact poor beggars much more than we are models for the perfect punk.

We might have some questionably grand illusions...I can't help but laugh at some DIY communities who don't believe there is any hope for artists in America at all...I've seen a handful of actually amazing musicians go from zero to hero in L.A. in front of my very eyes the past few years just like in the movies!

And that's my motivation in life right now: to get people to believe in their local bedroom-weirdo musician who's unsettlingly focused not only so that artist can survive but also maybe not have to do it all so alone...Seriously just read up on the early careers of Trance Farmers, Ariel Pink, and Mykki Blanco. Shit's real and to me they are real fucking punks of our generation. I actually would probably not have half as much faith in myself as I do if it weren't for them. They also, like me, had trouble keeping the same lineup especially at the start. Why is it that there are *such* few individuals in the whole country it seems who believe in surviving off originality?

MRR: Tell me more about your upcoming tour and how you said you're evolving into more of a TV show than a band. Will it be streaming on the Period BOMB TV YouTube channel, or somewhere else? What kind of stuff will be on the show?

CamBam: Oh it's going to be an interesting one...Another two-monther as usual for us, it's about half DIY as fuck punk houses and half pretty darn nice venues. We actually made two polar opposite tour flyers. One we made doodling late as fuck the other night and the other is for all the nice venue shows with event pages that I had to convince to let us play using our earlier music designed explicitly for that purpose. We've been actually limited to playing larger venues in so many towns where we were playing the same strong DIY collectives for years but so many of those DIY spaces have gotten shut down since the Ghostship fire. The people who lived at them all still have tons of local and DIY artists hitting them up to help them play a show so they find some café or basement to pick up the slack. Now those places are super bombarded or have shut down already. I had to ask my friends in each town to get creative and think of a place that can be all ages sometimes, and let bigger acts or companies come in and run their own show. I would tell them: "Even if you think it's too big or fancy for us! I'll pull it off, watch." And the results in these cities during this last tour were actually fantastic. I think because with no more DIY options, these people are even more thirsty now for something weird to do. And I like to get even weirder and go even harder when I'm playing somewhere where it seems extremely inappropriate!

I am so excited to share and interview so many of these people I know around the country that are the living proof that DIY America, though in hiding, is alive and beaming with resilience! They are pursuing smart and clever ways to create their own funding for new ideas of all sorts. I think that all sorts of people will be able to relate and be inspired because these kinds of communities harness not just bold and honest art, but they also have people who have overcome so much adversity in such creative ways. I have a feeling that some of these people who would never be down with the DIY scene before that are having a harder and harder time finding jobs would totally benefit from learning to do things in a way that doesn't involve buying what the government wants you to think will fix you. I hope that this show can be helpful in that way too!

Other than featuring my favorite artists in the country live and some short interviews, the TV show will also include other skills I've been meaning to master like dream interpretation, tap dancing, and ventriloquism.

MRR: I can't imagine all the hard work and trial and error it's taken for you to get where you are today. Aside from having to change the lineup, what have you learned or changed since you first started touring?

CamBam: Man, that's a pretty deep well you just pissed into...I am such a loose cannon constantly making any mistake as soon as it can possibly be made that the lessons are totally endless. I'm sure I will kick myself later for not naming one of the many ways I've grown since I started discovering so many different kinds of

places and people but...It's all about connecting with other kindred souls and then connecting them with each other for me, to further prove to ourselves that there has been some kind of concrete yet invisible structure created here between all of us. It can be really hard to explain if you haven't been on tour. When I'm on tour I feel like I have such a stronger support system than I do when I'm off it. As soon as we get back here all of our families are like "Please don't do that again you're killing me!" Latinx parents especially are usually all about their families being really tight and uniform and hoping that all their babies get married and make more babies immediately.

When I was planning our first tour I just wanted it to be like a girl's trip and have people play dress up every night from this giant pile of clothing I had accumulated either from my kind and generous street friends or from parking my van in front of the Out of the Closet in Echo Park at dawn before they get their overnight donations. I still can't get rid of hardly any of it even though I usually stay in the same piece of clothing for most the tour. I still want this! Even though I'm barely a girl. [laughter] All of my L.A. girls weren't down to drop everything and zigzag around the county for four or so months on this open ended voyage. Luckily we were jumping on our friend Snow Wite's tour and he let me adopt the rest of his band when mine left. Having anyone to play with and / or travel with is so amazing for me. It makes me my most optimal self. Trying to survive in any one place after tour is the worst and it doesn't seem to ever get much easier. It's like back to drawing board...No idea what's next! Then someone offers me a show somewhere that's just too cool...I guess I have 'til my van gives out to figure out something different to do with all this energy and passion. It hurts so much to think about but I think maybe with the love of my incredible partner I'll be OK when that day comes. Oh, I almost forgot! We *finally* found a place we can afford even when we're on tour that fits all our junk into a nice-looking, organized record store and studio! It's called Museum of Shit and it's in Davie, Florida. It's only one of the ten official distribution centers Crass Lips Records (a label my former drummer Gladys and I helped start in South Florida) now has in America.

MRR: What advice would you give to young and inexperienced members of oppressed groups such as myself who admire Period Bomb and your commitment to the DIY lifestyle?

CamBam: I say to you all *please* fight with us by standing up for yourselves in any kind of musical environment whether it's a crappy dive bar or a DIY safe space. You deserve nothing but a completely equal opportunity to throw your own show. If you are a band on a long tour, the protocol has always been and will always been to keep 100 percent of the door. What is done with that is completely up to you if you threw the show. So know your unwritten rights and do not stand for injustice just because you think your music is too weird or bad to ever get paid for! Even if you don't need the money, you are doing a disservice to the rest of us by letting clubs think they can do whatever they want with an artist's money. The other day at a new so-called DIY space in Little Haiti (the only part of Miami that has not always been constantly overdosing on capitalism) I was running my own show (which I did 100% of the work for and even had to provide a sound system for) and the owner wouldn't let someone who's lived there their whole lives in for less than five bucks! Apart from this being illegal, it was also blatant gentrification happening in front of my eyes. I started talking about equal opportunity and they brought up letting an old Haitian jazz musician play there the other day. Um...Did you let his friends in to come see him? Didn't think so. Chances are that is the only kind of music he's ever been allowed to play at any venue. That is not creating equal opportunity for expression. We got into a pretty heated debate and finally she was like, "Fine, you'll be the only artist ever here who took more than 50% for a $5 show." I was livid to find out she was doing that to artists in my hometown and no one had ever complained about it yet! Even in L.A., New York, gentrified Austin and Seattle they do not take more than 30%!

I always stand up for myself anytime a venue owner is trying to pick bands for me or telling me how to have a more successful show or I see or hear of a DIY place not responding to someone because they are too low class, disabled, or just too weird! If I were OK with entertainment being censored that way I'd seriously move to Cuba in a heartbeat but I'm not so I fight hard here any time I come across this kind of injustice. I have seen the old "owner's buddy default promoter" thing die off in quite a lot of venues. *Anyone* can post an event to some Facebook groups. Even a girl in a band! Quite often they will do it much better than your buddy you are paying to get drunk and hit on girls.

Pretty much as long as I've heard the phrase "DIY" thrown around I've heard "DIY means REPLY" and I think that's because capitalism has shut real artists out of our jobs and we desperately need a place to do it! I personally find it rude when a venue doesn't give a reason for why they are not interested. I have not found it to be bad business to follow up with a "What's going on that night instead?" Of course the way you communicate is super important on both ends and you don't want to come off as entitled

because you are a minority who happens to not be getting gigs. I then gauge what kind of people we're working with there by their response and leave a note in the open source "DIY TOUR GUIDE" doc we have pinned to the Crass Lips Records Facebook page.

We are a non-profit label and I find that to be really the optimal business platform for any kind of music- or art-related business. I started surviving off of cooking or making drinks for people at shows at the gallery I lived in around about seven years ago and somehow have been able to pay rent or car payments ever since by doing what I can and asking for donations. That "Create now, Compensate later" model has been working for us now at CLR. If you make terribly weird music and have no idea how to put it out, contact us and we'll help you if we have enough donations or otherwise we can do it for about one dollar per tape!

I think of everything I'm a part of I am most proud of this label. It has grown so fast...A few dozen weirdos came out of the woodwork spread out all over the world almost as soon as we opened our doors and then together we somehow keep generating random people's interest. And it keeps growing! I still can't believe we get to put out Bleeders debut studio album and the new Blotchout album! And as soon as we get back from tour, the next Pucker Up album! Can you believe it?

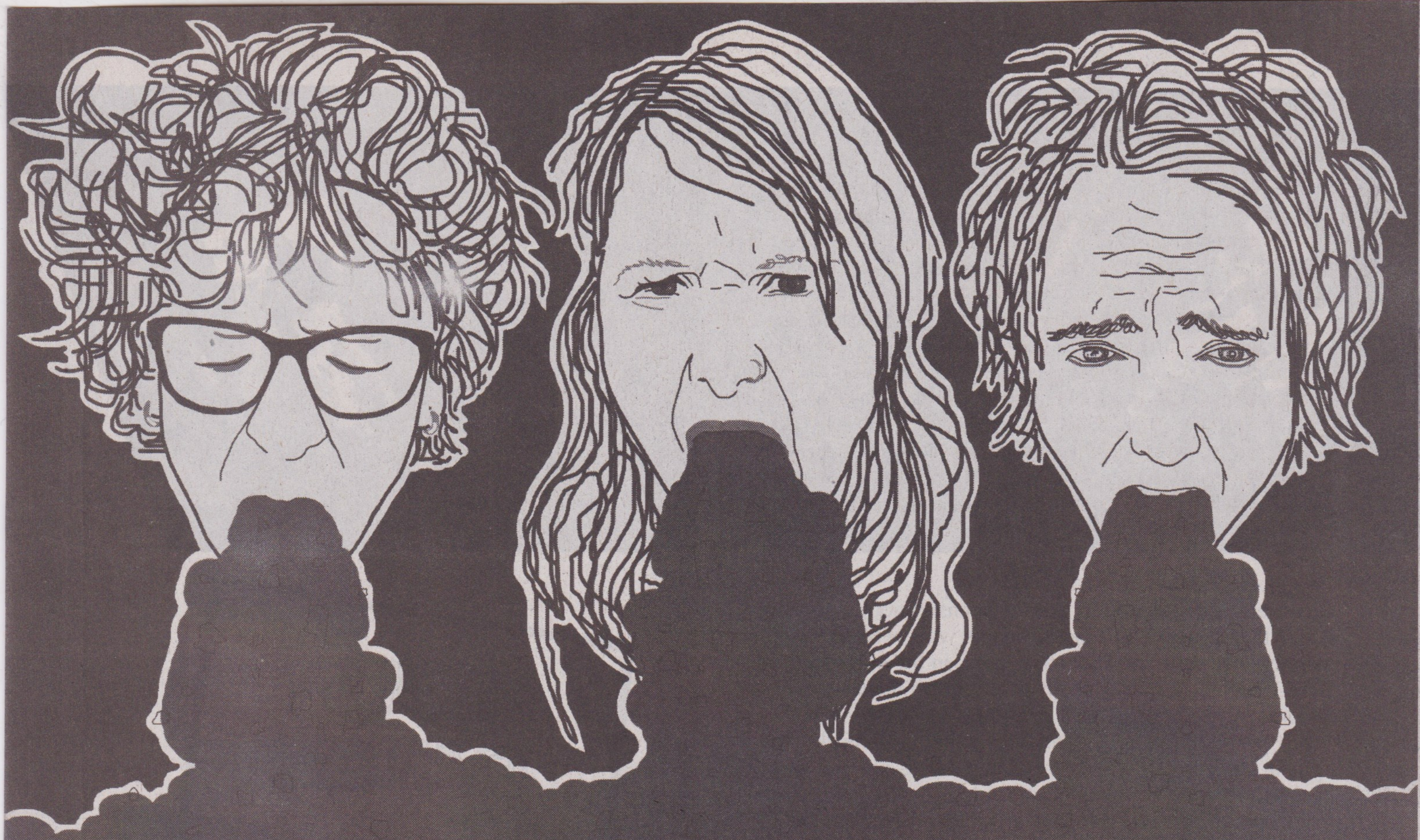
MRR: As far as I know, you're the only active band with your own breakfast cereal. What do Period Bomb Pops taste like? If I call 877-577-BOOM, will you send me a box?
CamBam: Man, that stuff...I feel like it tastes like duck poop. [laughter] So don't worry, I won't send you one. I was pretending to send people the cereal but actually those mini cereal boxes fit 2 tapes inside perfectly!

MRR: What's up next for Period Bomb?
CamBam: Dj, Bobby, and Bry are the new crew doing this "Wise-Dumb Tour" with me. Oh yeah! And we just decided to change our name to Queeried Bomb because there's no cis people in the current lineup and we don't want to deal with another billion period questions when we go play our debut three month Euro Tour in the spring!

periodbomb.bandcamp.com

TOUR DATES

October 7 – Brooklyn
October 8 – Syracuse
October 9 – W. Massachusetts
October 10 – Providence
October 11 – Boston
October 12 – Kutztown
October 13 – Philadelphia
October 14 – Philadelphia
October 15 – Baltimore
October 16 – Richmond
October 18 – Columbus
October 19 – Dayton
October 20 – Cincinati
October 21 – Lexington
October 24 – Nashville
October 26 – Asheville
October 27 – Athens
October 28 – Atlanta
October 29 – Savannah
October 30 – St. Petersburg
October 31 – Miami



UNSANITARY NAPKIN

John Dimory of Zero Style Records recently sat down with Wellington, New Zealand's Unsanitary Napkin to discuss resistance, art, and nastiness.

Photos by Tom Anderson and John Lake.
Artwork by Roger Grauwmeijer and Hannah Salmon.

MRR: What's with the name?

Hannah: We wanted something with an obvious feminist reading, something that would be confronting but would also make people laugh. We are inspired by the use of humour as a tool to dismantle oppressive power structures…that sounds kinda grandiose, but that was the line of thinking. We still get the occasional comment that suggests people don't quite understand the name, i.e. "You don't get many napkin-themed bands, do ya?"

Rupert: Someone on Twitter said we had the worst band name in New Zealand, someone else thought we were called "Insoluble Napkin".

MRR: How did you get together? What's your origin story?

Rupert: I met Hannah and Ben in 2011 and was very inspired by them as artists and as people, and a little nervous to talk to them... I still feel inspired by them but the nerves have subsided! At the time they were involved with organising an exhibition to fundraise for the 18 arrestees of a series of unlawful and unjustified "terror raids" in 2007. The raids were carried out under allegations that a number of New Zealand activists were involved in a paramilitary training camp in the Urewera mountain ranges. The arrestees' lives had been been seriously affected by a four year legal battle, and they were being denied a trial by jury at the time. The so-called evidence of any "terrorist activity" was deemed inadmissible, and those particular charges were dropped the next year. Hannah, Ben and I started to spend more time together and eventually Hannah asked me to join a band called Unsanitary Napkin.

Hannah: I had wanted to play music with Ben for ages, we'd even had one jam together, but I was intimidated by his drumming prowess. We recruited Rupert into this hypothetical band when we we started getting to know him through community-based creative activist projects we were involved in together. I was avoidant for quite a while, making excuses not to practice, because I was also intimidated by Rupert's musical prowess. Then, one day, we were at a Take Shelter show, one of a series of day-time punk shows that took place in old army bunkers around Wellington, and we were all really inspired! We were like "Let's actually do this thing!". And then we actually did it.

MRR: What's the scene like in Wellington, New Zealand?

Hannah: This band would never have happened without the support of the Wellington scene. We've been incredibly fortunate. There's a lot of support, and a huge appetite for new bands. The Wellington scene is full of creative people running awesome initiatives; distros, such as Zero Style, Always Never Fun and Limbless, recording studios such as Scumbag College, screenprinting facilities like Slime City—all of these entities helped us get our releases out. There aren't a huge number of venues for punk shows in town, but that has led to shows at bowling clubs, community halls and gardens, abandoned army bunkers. And these are arguably the best shows—where you've got bowls-enthusiasts drinking at the bar, eating roast dinners and watching the rugby down one end of a community bowling club, and people watching a punk band down the other end. There have also been a few recent initiatives around promoting gender diversity in the scene, festivals organised around bands with female front-people, or a majority of female members, stuff like that. That being said, I am a privileged, cis, white female, and I know there's prejudice in the scene that I just don't experience. There's still work to be done.

Rupert: There's so much excitement around new bands! I'm newer to the Wellington punk scene than Ben and Hannah, but was really drawn to it by bands like Rogernomix (who Ben plays with), Fantails, The Johos… amazing bands who had long been involved in the Wellington anarchist / activist community and cared about respect, equality and the safety of their audience. I've found that very exciting, and feel a lot of love for the open-mindedness and supportiveness of the people around us, and the energy they've put into making the punk scene more inclusive and welcoming. It makes us energized to contribute in whatever way we can. I think there's still some ways to go, I don't think the New Zealand music scene as a whole always feels like a particularly safe environment for people who are trans or gender-diverse, and those are conversations we're having and still need to have.

MRR: What's it like being on the worst record label in NZ?

Rupert: John's being an egg. If it wasn't for Zero Style and Up The Punks and all the aforementioned lovely people, half of these bands would probably disappear without a trace. I listened to the Johos tape John put out so much it barely plays anymore, and I only got to see them once or twice.

Ben: It is unclear whether John is being self-deprecating about Zero Style, or uncharacteristically insulting of Always Never Fun and / or Limbless. Either way, he is dead wrong! All three have been super supportive, and we're lucky to have em. Having other proactive people on board has given the whole thing lots of momentum and makes it feel way more like a collective project.

I know Hannah is behind all of the Unsanitary artwork. It's looks like painstaking stuff, are your processes as grueling as they look or do you enjoy creating heinous portraits of already repulsive people? Tell us a thing or two about your processes, or where your ideas spring from?

Hannah: I like doing it. In fact, when I'm like really immersed in drawing something, it's pretty much my favourite thing. I plow through movies and audiobooks and music while I draw. I like detail, and repulsive portraits are good because they allow for lotsa detail. I feel like that grotesquery is powerful and funny, and I guess that's kinda become what my art practice is about - utilising those elements to call stuff into question. Actually the art for the Unsanitary Napkin LP was created at this crazy spa retreat. I won a raffle through my work and Ben and I got to go to this spa retreat outside of Wellington for two nights. I'd never really won anything before so this was surreal. We got a free bottle of champagne (which we mixed with energy drinks) and got drunk and got massages, and stayed up late and created stuff.

MRR: You've got two releases, both with artwork that relates to US politics, why did you choose Trump as subject matter?

Hannah: Trump seemed to be this massive threat, not only to the US, but to the rest of the world. The US is so influential. Trump also embodies these archaic vestiges of neoliberalism, facism and patriarchy. He could be symbolic of neoliberalism's last gasp, you know? Or he could be symbolic of this shift towards the darkest of times. I know that satire and parody are not exactly gonna dismantle dictatorial regimes, but I'd like to think they can serve to shed light, maybe rally people together and cut through some of the hopelessness.

Ben: The artwork for the demo was put out about six months before the US election, when it still seemed like a remote possibility that Trump would be elected, but we felt like it was still important to highlight the potential horror of a neo-fascist clown coming to power. For the second release, we had decided to do something completely different with the artwork, but then the election was only weeks away and things were starting to get scary. Trump coming to power still seemed like something that couldn't happen outside of an absurd dystopian comedy, but it was becoming more and more real, so we decided to just double down and go for an even more graphic assault on his misogyny.

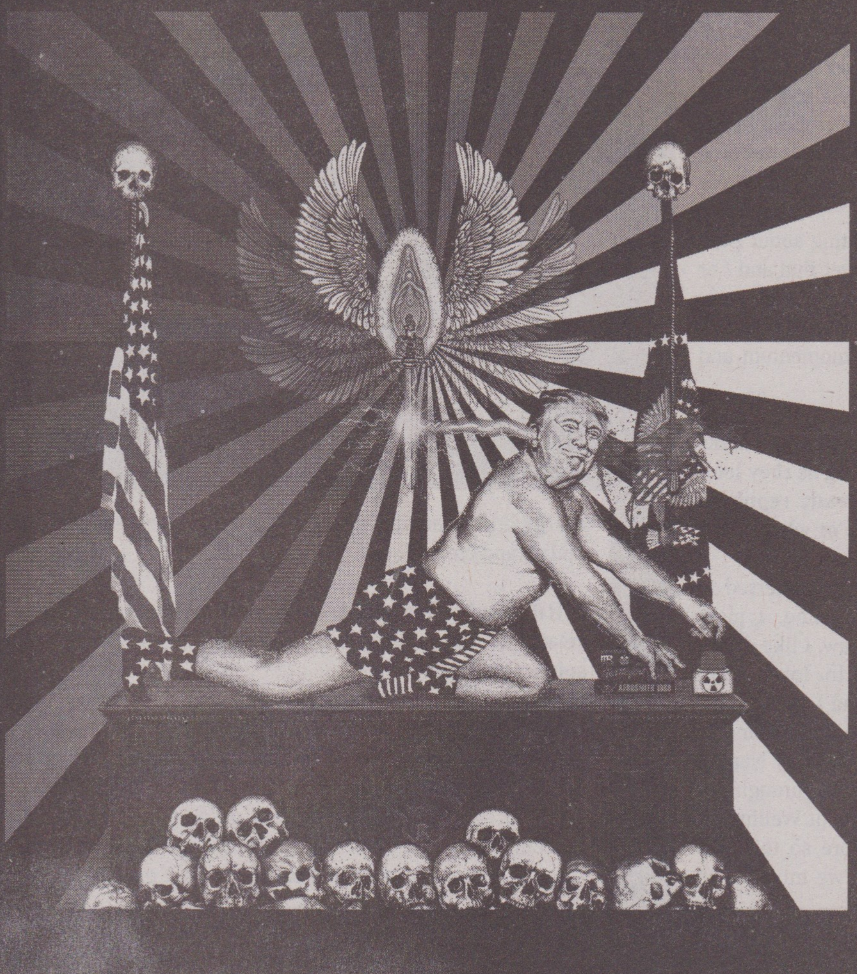
MRR: Do you see parallels between the political situation in the US and the situation in NZ?

Rupert: I don't know if the parallels are necessarily direct and they have long histories of their own, but there does seem to be growing xenophobia in relation to our housing crisis, to unemployment, and low wages amongst other things. There have been anti-immigration sentiments expressed from all sides of our political spectrum, which makes such scapegoating appear more credible than it really is. It's a false dichotomy, and encourages the targeting of individual communities for what is really a systemic problem of growing inequality. On the other side of that there are also organizations here like Doing Our Bit, who have received a lot of public support in their campaign for NZ to double its current refugee intake, and have done a great deal to hold our government and media to account.

Hannah: The political situations in the US and New Zealand are not the same, but I think some aspects of the situation in the US are global, perhaps not playing out with the same degree of absurdity, but playing out nonetheless. New Zealand is not exempt. Our country is in no way devoid of prejudice. New Zealand has a long history of racism, towards Māori, and towards immigrants. The government has virtually refused to acknowledge that we are in the midst of the worst humanitarian crisis since WW2, and consequently Australia takes three times as many refugees per capita as New Zealand. Bigoted media personalities get a disproportionate amount of airtime to espouse their gross bullshit and our former prime minister made homophobic jokes and pulled young women's hair (seriously). Our current prime-minister said he doesn't know what being a feminist means, refuses to hold an inquiry into an NZ SAS raid in Afghanistan that allegedly left six civilians dead, and refuses to hold an inquiry into the historical abuse of children taken from their family homes and put into state care facilities. New Zealand has managed to create this image for itself as "trailblazing" because we gave women the vote early on, because we are nuclear-free, and because of the anti-apartheid Springbok tour protests in 1981, and it's almost as though the thinking is that we are now absolved of any of the responsibilities that come with being part of this world.

MRR: What are some of the concepts explored through your music? What are you trying to say?

Hannah: We're trying to say a bunch of things. We try to critique systems that perpetuate prejudice and exploitation. The song "Feminine Odour" is about how examples of everyday sexism accumulate and



reinforce the subjugation of women. "Chode Crystal" is about Pick Up Artists and Men's Rights Activists. It uses PUA lingo (they have a whole dictionary of terms and acronyms—look this shit up!) to tell the story of someone who goes from being an AFC (an Average Frustrated Chump), through PUA-dom, to full-blown homicidal MRA (a la Elliot Rodger). The term "chode crystal" is PUA lingo for a group of guys in a bar ("chodes") who are too afraid to talk to people and are bringing down the mood of the venue. "Chode vaporization" is when you infiltrate the chode crystal and disperse the chodes. We also have a song called "Sweet Exploitation" which is about what would happen if the TPP were implemented and all of the key players got together to have a big, sordid party where Aerosmith played, and maybe Ted Nugent, and they consumed canapes and made sacrifices to the gods of Capitalism.

Rupert: The songs usually come together over a few ciders! Like Hannah's said, we're interested in critiquing governmental and social institutions of power that reinforce misogyny and racism, and also heterosexism and transmisogyny. We're still a relatively young band, and we're excited to keep on pursuing these subjects and seeing what sorts of songs and images will grow out of it.

MRR: You recently played the Such Is Life festival outside of Melbourne, Australia, as well as a couple other local shows while you were over there. Did you notice anything different in the way people reacted to your message and live performance?

Ben: Such Is Life is a very special one, and I'm stoked that we got to be part of the very last one ever. Hundreds of punks from all over Australia and New Zealand camping in indigenous eucalypt forest surrounded by wombats and kookaburras, and really excellent D-beat / crust bands from all over. As far as Melbourne goes, I really enjoy playing over there with awesome bands and lovely people, but it always makes me feel lucky about what we have in Wellington. In bigger cities I often get the sense that things are just a bit harder to organize, and scenes feel like they're more fragmented by sub-genre. I really like that Wellington's tiny size and isolated existence means that people into different things have to work together, and we get shows with diverse lineups and different types of people united by a DIY ethos as a result.

Rupert: I can't say I noticed anything particularly different other than what Ben's said! It was a blast. I was only in Melbourne for three nights and caught up with a lot of friends over there. I stayed on my friend Alex's floor with her bunny rabbit Pig, and we drank whisky and watched Fei Cheng Wu Rao.

MRR: How would you characterise your sound? Who you are you influenced by?

Rupert: I guess we haven't really tried to keep the Crass records thing a secret! Before we started playing together we talked a lot about the first Die Kreuzen album, and Devo. Lots of Devo. We bonded over crude songs about butts and boils and b-grade horror too. Unsanitary Napkin are kinda the complete opposite of another band I play in, Bent Folk, who do things at a much more…glacial pace? You could put it like that. How would you guys describe Unsanitary Napkin?

Hannah: I feel like it's really hard to know what you sound like, you know? We've been described as garage punk, anarcho-femme hardcore and Riot Grrrl, among other things. We do a cover of "Blissful Myth" by Rudimentary Peni and a cover of "Jerkin' Back 'N' Forth" by Devo, so that makes a couple of our influences pretty explicit. There's a lil' sprinkling of D-beat in there too. We also bond over a mutual love of stuff like the Coneheads, CCTV and those associated bands.

MRR: What are your plans for the future?

Hannah: Erm...just to...keep going? I feel like we've been incredibly fortunate so far. So unexpectedly fortunate. It's kinda hard to say what's gonna happen...but we've got new songs in the works and we're hoping to maybe put out a 7" and then hopefully another 12" in the not-too-distant future. I'd love to tour overseas as well. I recently rearranged my life so I'm actually "working" in the traditional sense very little, and I've gotta say, it fuckin' rules. Unsap-Nap world tour 2018!

unsanitarynapkin.bandcamp.com

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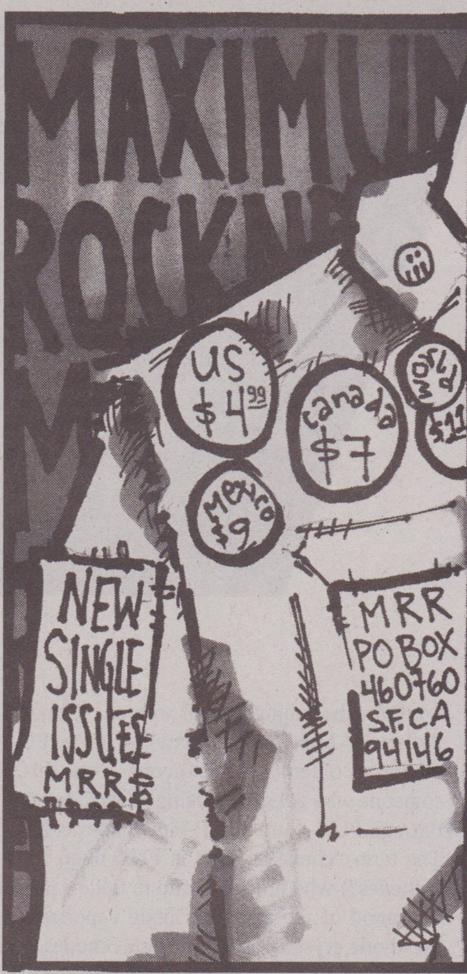

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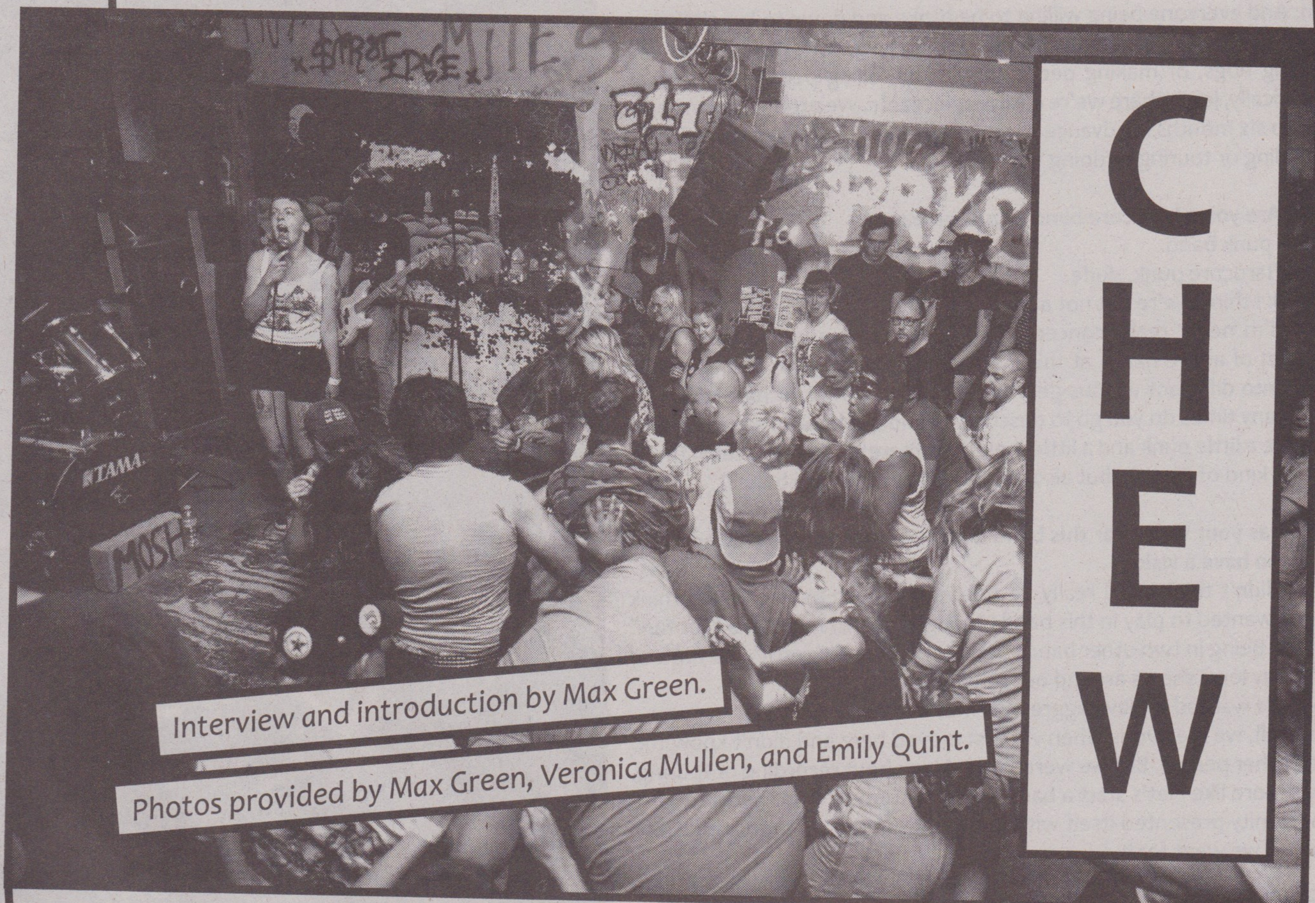
C.H.E.W. formed in the summer of 2015 in Chicago, IL. They have released two split 7"s and a demo cassette since pressed to vinyl by Neck Chop Records. Their newest release is a split 7" with Chicago hardcore band Rash, out now on Slug Salt Records. They have toured as far as Miami and Portland and are finishing up writing their first LP. Personnel includes Doris on vocals, Jono on drums, Russell on bass, and Ben on guitar. The band's shows deliver a relentless assault of frenetic punk energy, characterized by songs that flow into each other without pause. The result is a barrage of sound from the moment the band begins to play to the final note. C.H.E.W. embarks on an east coast tour in October that includes dates at the Not Dead Yet and Dispuppy festivals.



CHEW

Interview and introduction by Max Green.

Photos provided by Max Green, Veronica Mullen, and Emily Quint.

MRR: Y'all have been a band for a touch over two years. Where the hell's your first full-length?

Jono Giralt: In the works.

Ben Rudolph: In the workshop?

Doris Carroll: It's on the way.

Russell Harrison: We're pretty much done with writing it. It should be recorded by the end of the year.

MRR: Is there a reason you waited to do an LP after a few smaller releases?

Jono: It's the natural progression of rock music. We did some smaller releases and we were still figuring out what our sound is.

Ben: The splits were also an excuse to release a bunch of things with our friends' bands. Doing splits and cassettes first has allowed us to do little projects with people we don't see too often. Really it's just that it's taken us about a year to actually finish writing the LP. We're all in other bands so sometimes writing time can be limited.

MRR: Is the LP going to sound different? If so, how?

Jono: The writing process has definitely been more technical and collaborative. I don't know about it sounding different as much as the approach to writing it was different.

Ben: It sounds like the same band writing songs that we're spending more time on. We're having conversations about stuff we like but haven't done yet and want to pull off.

Doris: I think it definitely expands upon the sound. The new stuff goes a little further, and gets weirder.

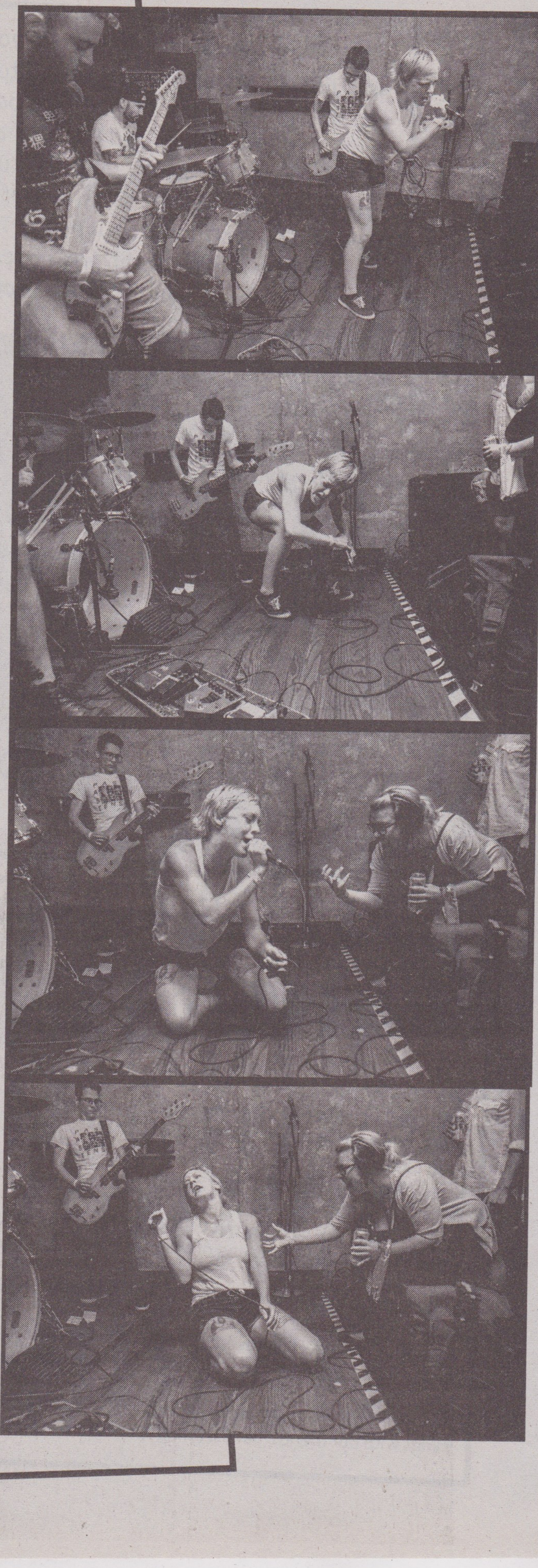
Ben: A lot of the songs on the demo were old, some of the riffs were leftovers from other projects or things we'd been sitting on for a while, and everything since then has been exclusively for this band. This new thing is being written as a cohesive album and recording.

MRR: You mentioned being in other bands. What are they and how do you manage splitting up your time? How far ahead are you planning?
Ben: Russell and I play in a rock band called Great Deceivers that's based in Chicago. Jono has been filling in for Backslider from Philadelphia, which is challenging because they're in another state. Jono and I also play in Knife Hits which has members based in Philadelphia so we have to make time for that.
Jono: Honestly we make time for it by having Google calendar and using group chats.
Ben: And everyone being willing to be broke and down to live their lives so we can do fun stuff with friends. We all also work flexible jobs, like walking dogs, or making people drinks, or selling people music gear. Specifically, jobs where we're easily replaceable. We probably plan about four to six months in advance to make sure we know when each band is recording or touring or doing whatever.

MRR: Are you a hardcore band or a punk band?
Ben: A punk band.
Jono: Hardcore punk, dude.
Russell: I think we're not not a hardcore band.
Doris: I'm never really concerned with what we're considered. There are a lot of active bands at this moment that defy a firm definition and blend into different various genres, whether it's punk or hardcore. Like how many times do you go to describe a band but have to say things like "they're a little punk and a little metal and there's a little D-beat in there, and it's kind of Finnish, but also influenced by Japanese bands?"

MRR: Has your vision for this band changed since you've started it? Do you even have a vision?
Ben: I didn't think we'd really be touring as much as we have. I think when I wanted to play in this band I thought of it as more of a "for fun" project. Being in two other bands that toured, we figured it'd be fun and we'd play local shows around our other projects.
Jono: We wanted to have aggressive music to play.
Ben: Well, we met Doris when we first moved here and didn't know too many other people. But we weren't thinking about recording or touring, it was more like "let's start a band and play shows!" And then a touring opportunity presented itself with our friends in the Orlando band False Punk, so we went for it.

MRR: What's it like to be a punk band in Chicago?
Ben: How do you even answer that question?
Russell: It's weird because where we come from there's only one scene, punk or not. And here there's at least three or four.
Doris: Yeah there are a lot of different scenes and groups to be involved with and play shows with. It's a really nice thing to experience. As far as people attending shows in general there's a good amount of people that have interests in bands that exist in multiple different scenes.
Ben: People are very encouraging here and there isn't as much snobbery in Chicago as I've experienced in other places. As far as being supportive of new bands and young people starting bands, there's not really a "cool kid" club vibe happening here. There's a lot of support for people and ideas and new projects. People will let you hop on shows. I think after going on tour a lot, Chicago is also a more inclusive place, and we're really lucky to be here. People make it a point to make it not a white boy's club—you don't see that everywhere. We want to play with bands that are different and book shows for bands that are different and not the same thing that's existed in punk for ever.



MRR: What's it like to be a transplant?

Russell: Ben, Jono, and I are from Orlando.

Doris: I'm from the Chicago suburbs.

Russ: It's great to be a transplant. It's nice to feel small. In Orlando there's only so many people, bands, and venues, and we've known most of them since we were teenagers. Although I will say more people means people are less friendly, generally speaking. I know I'm less friendly. That seems to be the case for most big cities.

Ben: Even though we all like it here and we're growing accustomed to it, for the three of us, being from a small place with a small scene where everyone knows each other definitely shaped how we interact with people and how we play music together—and our music in general.

Jono: Yeah, i think we actually have a very "Florida" sound. More aggressive, frantic, sporadic.

Ben: In a small place it sometimes felt like there was a competitiveness—starting new bands with different people and trying to write the best stuff you could. That still exists for us here, but there are so many people doing so many incredible things that it's a more humbling experience.

MRR: What's it like to start a new band in a new place while already having a lot of bands under your belt?

Jono: It makes me give way less of a fuck about what we sound like. I'm more into just going deep on whatever we're doing and letting people be into it or not be into it.

Ben: It's also nice, at least in my life for me, to come to a place where you can start over. There's no expectation of what we might sound like, not that it really matters, but it was kind of a clean slate and we had fresh ears on our own music. Our first show I don't think we really knew more than a handful of people there. Our first show here was with Wet Nurse, good friends of ours from Orlando. Even getting a show here was a little difficult at first.

MRR: What does the acronym C.H.E.W. stand for?

Jono: Chill hard every weekend, dude.

Doris: Crying heavily every week.

Russell: It's doesn't stand for anything, it's so you pronounce it correctly—see aych ee double you.

Ben: It stands for not a lawsuit. We got an official cease-and-desist letter from a "DIY" band who told us to contact their attorney. We got that letter while we were on tour, actually. Long story short—we couldn't think of anything better than "Chew" for our band name and when we searched it there was one band with one instrumental song posted online. We thought it would be fine, it seemed like a bedroom project or something. We actually joked that if we ever got sued we'd make it an acronym, and back then so many bands had single word names that were acronyms. They asked us to change it in July 2016, we said no politely, we didn't think anyone listening to either band would actually be confused so it shouldn't be a problem, we proposed we could be Chew (CHI) and they could be Chew (ATL). We didn't hear from them again until they sent us a cease-and-desist. Pretty not chill for a band that made to sure to stress they are a DIY band when they first communicated with us.

MRR: Do you view yourself as part of punk as a culture?

Jono: Begrudgingly.

Ben: Absolutely, we are.

Jono: Absolutely begrudgingly.

Ben: Yes, you can't play shows and want people to come see you play and not be involved in it. Obviously you can't not be if you're in a punk band and actually play DIY shows. Some people view it differently and that's important, that's also what it's for. For some people punk is a transformative tool and for others it isn't and we're somewhere in the middle of that. Some of us live in, and we all practice in, a space that doubles as a DIY show space so it's hard to feel like we're not connected to the punk culture in Chicago. We're definitely embedded in it.

Doris: I don't feel like I participate as much as I should. If you want people to care about your project I feel like it's kind of rude to expect anyone to show up to our shows if we don't support our fellow musicians and artists.

Ben: And part of it is about making friends with people and there being some sort of community, which we have. Doris lived here a lot longer than the three of us, so starting this band helped us meet people and integrate into what was already happening here. But it's still very insular and often not about just music and having fun. It'd be silly to say we're not involved in the culture, but we all have other things in life we do around punk and our lives don't revolve around being in this band and being in punk.

MRR: You guys never stop playing between songs. Have you always done that? If so, why?

Doris: Yep.

Russ: Because not doing that is boring. I hate being at shows where bands stop forever between songs and tune and talk or whatever. Just play the next song. Does Prince do that? Hell no. A Prince concert is four fucking hours of non-stop music. There's no reason not to.

MRR: What makes you interested in punk music?

Jono: Mostly drum riffs.

Russell: As a person who thinks too much, I think a lot of what separates this style of music from others is that the people who are making it aren't thinking about it too much.

MRR: Who are some contemporaries that you find inspiring?

Ben: As far as punk bands I think, at least for Chicago, the Bug, Bleeding Gums (RIP?), Pryss, Watcher, Migraine from Texas, Chainshot, Fluoride, and Tigress (RIP). Plus all of our friends bands—Penetrode, Low Hangers, Vivian K.

Jono: I'd honestly consider my drumming for this band influenced by the fact that I mostly listen to hip-hop. Like a sped up Busta Rhymes.

MRR: Do you want to be viewed as a band with a message, or a concept, or as just a band making good music?

Jono: For me, the latter.

Russ: I feel like it's not something we should think that hard about.

Ben: It's probably important to say that our band doesn't really have to have a message for us, there are more important things happening affecting other people that we're privileged to not have to make our band about a message on our own behalf, and we acknowledge that. The lyrical content is pretty traditional. It's inward looking, and we don't have an outright message, but Doris is a woman singing about mental health issues to other people, and what she's saying is being said in a very direct way.

MRR: Is there anything else you all would like to add?

Russell: I'd like to see more dog-fronted bands.

Jono: Please take your dogs to the park.

Doris: And veggie dogs. We love grilling and chilling. Don't bring your dog to the actual show but we'd love to meet them afterward.

Ben: More dogs, no masters.

Check out C.H.E.W. on their October tour:

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10/19: WASHINGTON, DC
10/20: RICHMOND, VA
10/21: RALEIGH ,NC
10/22: DISPUPPY FEST
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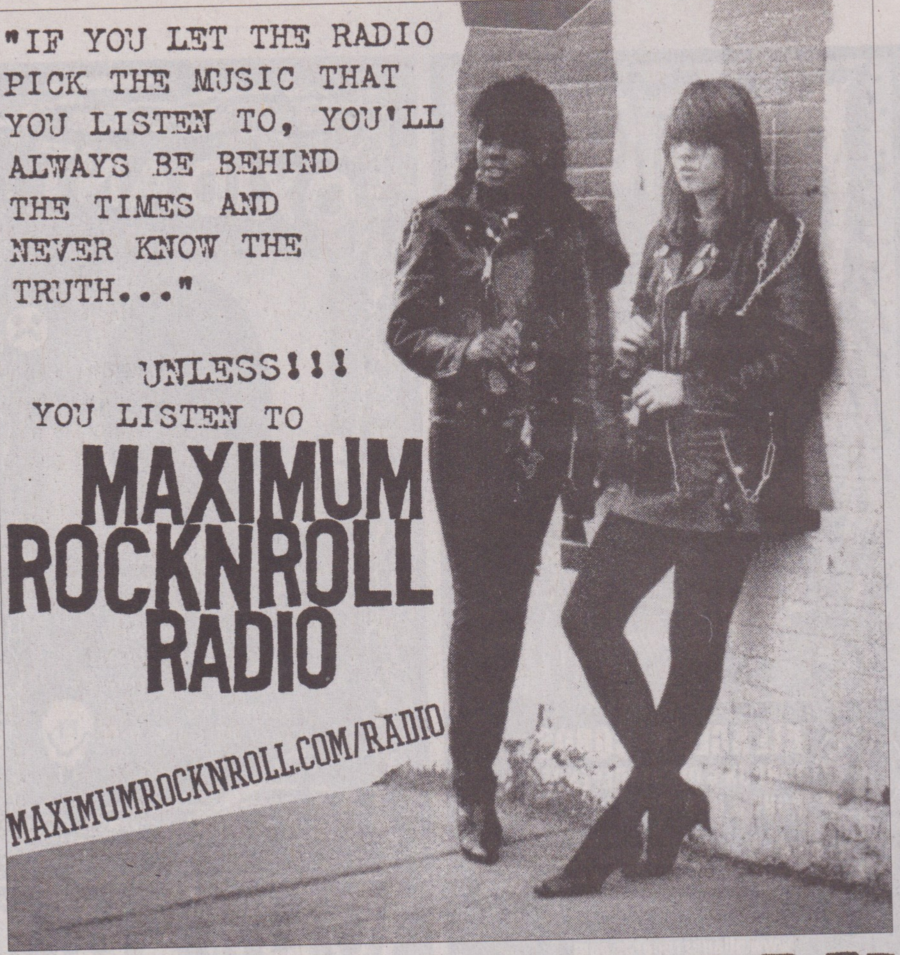

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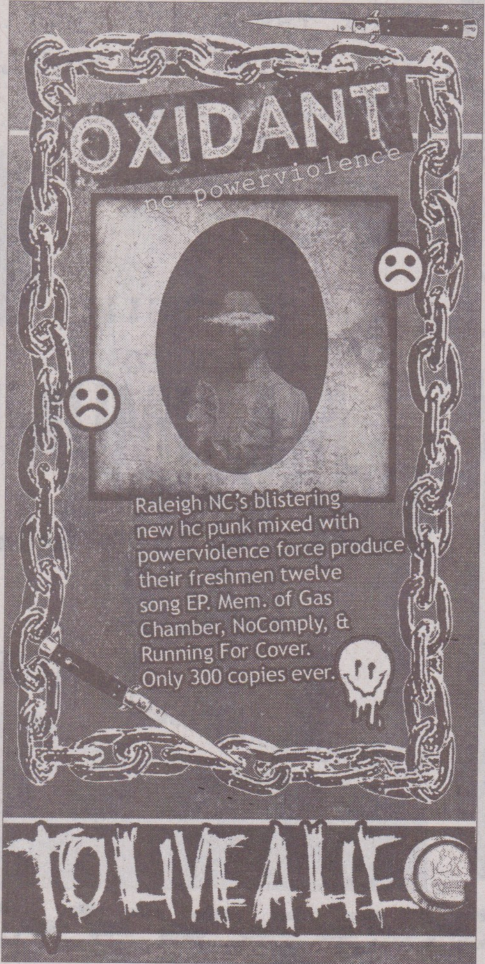
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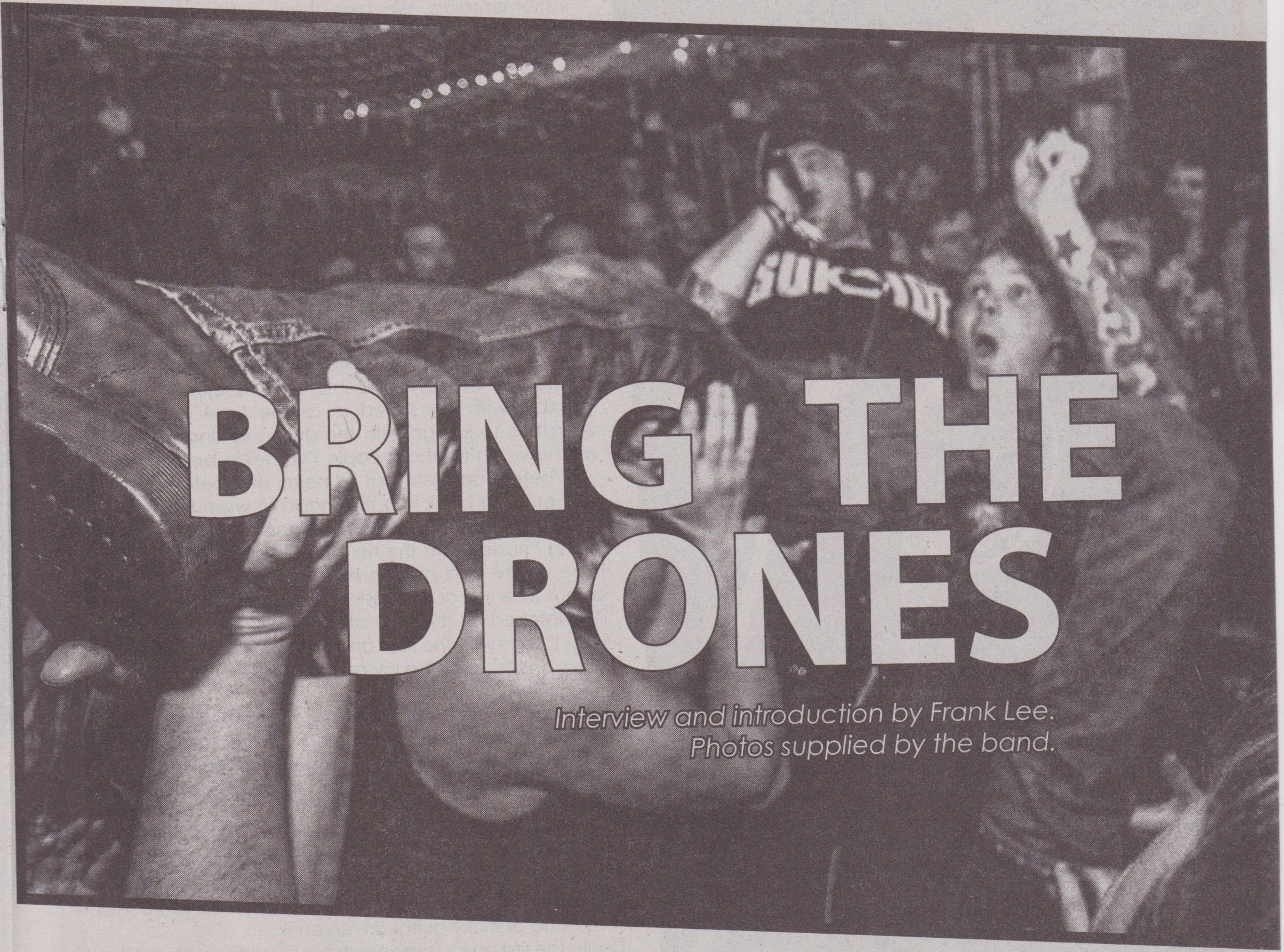
BRING THE DRONES

Interview and introduction by Frank Lee.
Photos supplied by the band.

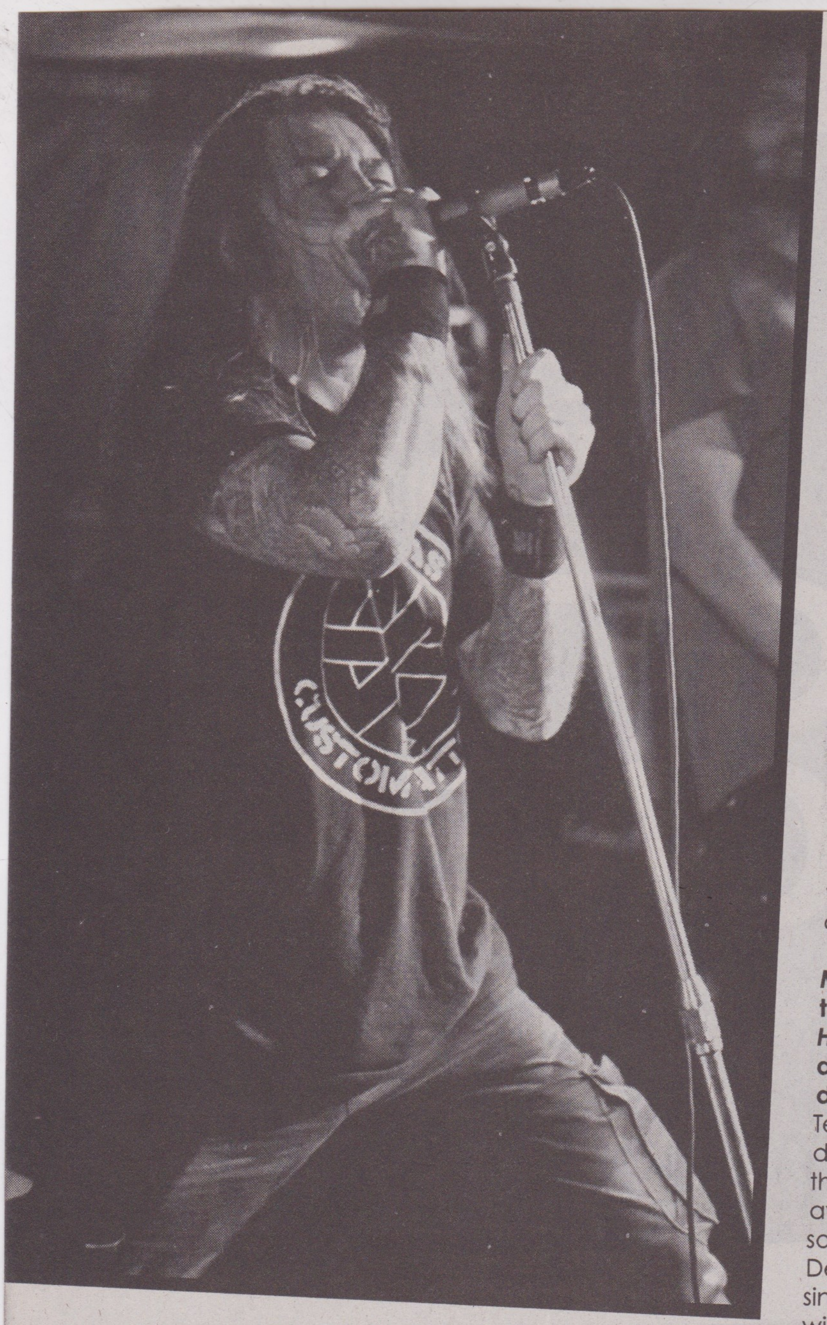


Bring The Drones is not a band. Not in the traditional sense.

Bring The Drones is at its core Charlie Claesson—whose career spans Anti Cimex, Driller Killer, Death Dealers, Wolfhour and many more—and Ted Fransson, also in Strikt Struktur. Beyond this core, Bring The Drones is not a rigid structure; they are more like a loose collective of punk musicians which ebbs and flows with each release, with Claesson and Fransson drawing on the talents of those they feel can add something to the overall sound.

On their new LP, Ignorance Paradise, the core is augmented by vocalists Denis Boardman of UK crust titans Doom and James Domestic of UKHC bruisers the Domestics, alongside the bass skills of Inge Johansson (Against Me!, the Refused, the (International) Noise Conspiracy), Frida Andersson (Vicious Irene), and Daniel Kjölsrud (Berzerk Bastards).

Since its initial conception, Ignorance Paradise has been the best part of three years in the making (albeit with plenty of downtime between sessions given the geographical spread and other commitments of members). Building on the sound of previous under the radar releases, Bring The Drones really come into their own with this release. From raging Swedish D-beat—Claesson's drumming is still a force of nature—to some slower but no less engaging passages, all with Fransson's often unusual riff structures and Boardman and Domestic's raw vocal attack, the album's eighteen tracks cover all the ground you'd expect given the personnel...plus a bit more. I thought it was about time to throw some questions their way.



MRR: You're all members of other bands and you seem to have a mix of people based in Sweden and the UK. Is it true that your lineup is somewhat fluid? How do you—Charlie and Ted—decide who else is going to be involved in Bring The Drones? What do they need to bring to the table? Who plays on the new record?

Charlie Claesson: At the beginning Ted and I did it all by ourselves, but we weren't really capable of doing proper vocals so we discussed bringing in a singer. And then a bass player. But we didn't want it to be a real band—we wanted to have control on the creative concept so we decided that everyone else involved were our guests. That way we can change lineups whenever we want depending on what kind of record we wanna do. We do have a lot of contact with UK bands, through our other bands, so it fell naturally to ask English people to join in. We have some conditions though. They have to work the same way we work. If it's a singer, they have to write their own lyrics. That way we maintain the original feel of the vocal works. And it's the same way with instrumentalists. We give them a framework, and then they can (almost) do what they want within that framework.

James Domestic: This is my first outing with Bring The Drones. I was asked to be involved after Charlie heard my band the Domestics' *Routine & Ritual* LP. I was extremely flattered when he asked me to do some vocals; I mean there are some pretty heavyweight people involved when you look at the pedigree, and here I am trekking over from Suffolk in the UK to Sweden to work with them. I'm not sure what they think I'm bringing to the table but I guess they must think it works, for this record at least.

Frida Andersson: Charlie asked me if I felt for putting some bass riffs on their next recording. The idea of recording straight in the studio without any practice made it a different and interesting project but also possible with my schedule at the time. It also felt liberating to just go with the guts and kind of exploit my nerves in front of people I've never been playing with before and Ted that I'd never met before. I got a little brought back into the mood to what first caught me into punk from the very beginning. The feeling of being "nude" with the risk of "failing" and just letting it be alright and maybe have something to a laugh about later on or at least a new experience...I got a little inspired by the way of making songs in this kinda way, just go with the flow and not overwork songs which can sometimes kill the joy on the way.

MRR: You've previously released the somewhat under-the-radar *Bring the Exterminators* 12" and the *Bordello Hospital* 7". Is the new LP *Ignorance Paradise* any different from those records and if so, in what way is it different?

Ted Fransson: One major difference is that I've stepped down from singing; James from the Domestics has taken that place, and we also got Denis from Doom when he's available. Musically, the Drones have turned more into some kind of tricky guitar driven punk.

Denis: The first one is more hardcore sounding with just Ted singing and it sounds a lot different to *Bordello Hospital* with just me singing. The new one with both me and James singing sounds more hardcore punk and varied.

MRR: Do you get sick of the "members of..." tag or is it a necessary evil?

Charlie: Yep, I do. But I also understand that it's interesting to know who the fuckers making the noise are! So I can live with it. It's a necessary evil.

Ted: I couldn't care less about previous bands when it comes to Bring The Drones. This is our band and this is now.

James: I doubt mentioning the Domestics is likely to have quite the same cachet as the Anti-Cimex, Doom, or Against Me! associations, but I think—particularly as I'm co-releasing the LP on Kibou—that it is a necessary evil just to hook people in. There's so much stuff competing for people's ears and y'know, I want people to check this record out. It shouldn't matter, but it does.

Inge Johansson: If you would have asked teenage me if I wanted to do music with members of Anti Cimex and Doom, I would probably have said no and started running for my life! Because to me back then, those guys seemed out of their mind and potentially dangerous! And they probably were! [*laughter*] But does it feel cool now to do music with people who have played in such amazing bands and stayed so true to their game and way of life—yes, it totally does.

Frida: I'm not a really big fan of tagging and in the way that tags can become a status symbol in a negative way by building up a power hierarchy and giving some people more advantages, etc. In some other contexts it can give me a hint about music and people that I like and help me to discover similar music. So, my final answer is that it's dependent on what the purpose of the tag is.

MRR: The rest of the world seems to think that Sweden is some kind of left-wing utopia, but I understand that this is changing to some degree with the right on the rise.

Charlie: We have right-wing, nazi, alt-right, nationalist arseholes flooding our country too. Well, not flooding, but they sound like they were flooding. I utterly hate them deep down from my guts. We had a wave of conservatism the last 10 years or so trying to destroy what social democrats have achieved during the last 100 years. Heck, even the social democrats are giving in to the right wing. They can all blow me like the wind.

Ted: Say what you will about Sweden, but you won't lose your house when you smack your teeth to the ground and the dental costs overshadow your shitty salary.

Denis: More like a socialist nightmare than a left-wing utopia.

Inge: Compared to many other countries in the world, Sweden is still a pretty equal and safe place, but compared to what Sweden used to be like, a lot has changed for the worse for working class people. Not because ideas like universal health care and public schools didn't "work," but simply because they became out of fashion politically in the neoliberal era. I never liked following fashion anyway.

Frida: Politics for me is to care about the world that I'm in. I can't tell that I agree fully with any party's political agenda but I still think it's important to care about it. The party structures is the contemporary method to control the power and economics and how things get shared. The right wing politics means the money gets shared between fewer people and leads to more suffering for a bigger amount of people. The left wing stands for solidarity and more people-oriented values and therefore I think it's important to take a stand when it comes to party politics. Passivity and indifference is a really selfish behaviour and being passive is also taking a stand of not caring.

And yes, Sweden is becoming more and more right wing which affects me and so many people around me in such a negative way. The built up threat is not getting calmer when the surveillance cameras and the police violence increases at the expense of our social system. This doesn't create a calm society. The Swedish Nazi party is currently wobbling between being the third to the second biggest party. This is really scary. It's also horrifying when even the social democrats are starting to lean more towards the right.

The focus on individualism where people care more about themselves than actually care for each other makes the world poor and empty in the end. We need to understand that we need each other, not that we should outcompete each other. This is also very important to keep in mind within the left scene so that we don't go on too hard picking on each other and splitting up our own groups too much and becoming more lonely, because we need each other. Staying together aiming for equal rights is the way of practicing it and showing it being possible.

MRR: Did I read somewhere that Sweden has produced the most ISIS fighters of any country in Europe? Is that true? If so, why do you think that's the case?

Charlie: You probably read that, yes, among other stories about how fucked up Sweden is. 90% of them are false and the rest is blown up. I think we had like 300

people or so that are suspected to travel to support ISIS. I think there are like 20–30 known and confirmed people from Sweden who fight for ISIS. That's too many, but...the propaganda tells us that there's like a tunnel from Sweden to Syria??? Fuck off!
Ted: Sweden is some way an open society but it might change after the events of April 7th.
Denis: Often politicians and the media in the USA try to use Sweden, because it is known as a quiet and neutral country, to instil fear to its own citizens. For instance, a few years ago my friend in Cleveland called me asking if I was OK because it was on the news there had been a big terror attack here, but there was nothing at all in the newspapers or on the news—and this is a country where it is on the news if a moose walks on the road. The same thing happened again this year when Trump again claimed there had been a terror attack here but again, nothing.
Inge: I think this has more to do with ISIS and the people who get attracted by their ideology, than it has to do with Sweden. Religion is the game of the arseholes, to quote a famous Swedish hardcore band.
Frida: I haven't read it myself, but I know that Sweden has the biggest production of weapons per capita in the world... and at the same time Sweden calls itself a neutral land. Fuck that.

MRR: Denis, you live in Sweden now. How long have you been there and what attracted you in the first place? How would you compare life in Sweden to life in the UK? Doesn't this make Doom rehearsals and gigs a bit tricky?
Denis: I've lived here for eighteen years now. I met a girl here when we were on tour in 1998; she initially moved to England with me but when she was pregnant we decided to move here. We are no longer together but we have a seventeen-year-old daughter together and we remain friends. While it is a little bit more quiet and boring here I feel it is a better quality of life than in England to be honest. I also have a small business here. Doom only rehearse for records usually but I record the vocals at home then send them to Bri. We only occasionally make changes to the set so I just rehearse by listening to a record and singing along. Most of our gigs are in other countries so I simply meet them there!

MRR: I know that Bring The Drones is currently a studio-only project, but do you have any plans to play live in the future?
Charlie: No.
Ted: We are not a live band but if a great opportunity comes along, we can be bribed if the price is right, supporting big punk bands or playing festivals etc.
James: I'm pretty busy with the Domestics, plus running the label and distro, doing *Pull The Trigger* zine and other stuff so I'm happy to keep Bring The Drones studio-only; although I'd equally be up for a gig here and there if the others wanted to. I'm easygoing really.
Inge: I wish!

MRR: What do you all do outside of Bring The Drones? Do any of you make a living solely through music? If not, what do you do to pay the bills?
Charlie: Not a chance. I picked the wrong kind of music for that. I work in construction and am waiting to get old enough to retire.
Ted: I got two other bands, a studio and have been working as a music teacher in a high school for three years.
Denis: If I did my back would feel a whole lot better.
James: I work for a data archive at a university. You can't make any money out of hardcore really, and if you go into it thinking you will then you're going into it for the wrong reasons, and you'll be sorely disappointed.
Inge: If I could choose to get the sex and drugs without the rock'n'roll, I would do just fine without the rock'n'roll!
Frida: I'm playing the bass and doing vocals in some other bands, touring and such, but no, we are not trying to make a profit, it's all punk DIY. For a living I work with movies and as a personal carer and some different projects.

MRR: Charlie, how do you feel about the legacy of your first band, Anti Cimex? The band have reached a kind of legendary status and have never reformed like a lot of bands would in a similar position. Were Anti Cimex as big as people seem to think these days? Would you ever consider reforming? What are the other Anti Cimex guys up to now?
Charlie: We weren't that big when we quit, but obviously our music has stood the test of time and is still listenable. That makes me proud of what we once did.

I'm strongly against old bands reforming. They take too much space from the new bands, and that's a sure way to kill punk. *But* it would have been really fun to play with the guys again, but then we would probably play under an alias or something, like a new band! Watch out for the Labradors debut EP! [*laughter*]

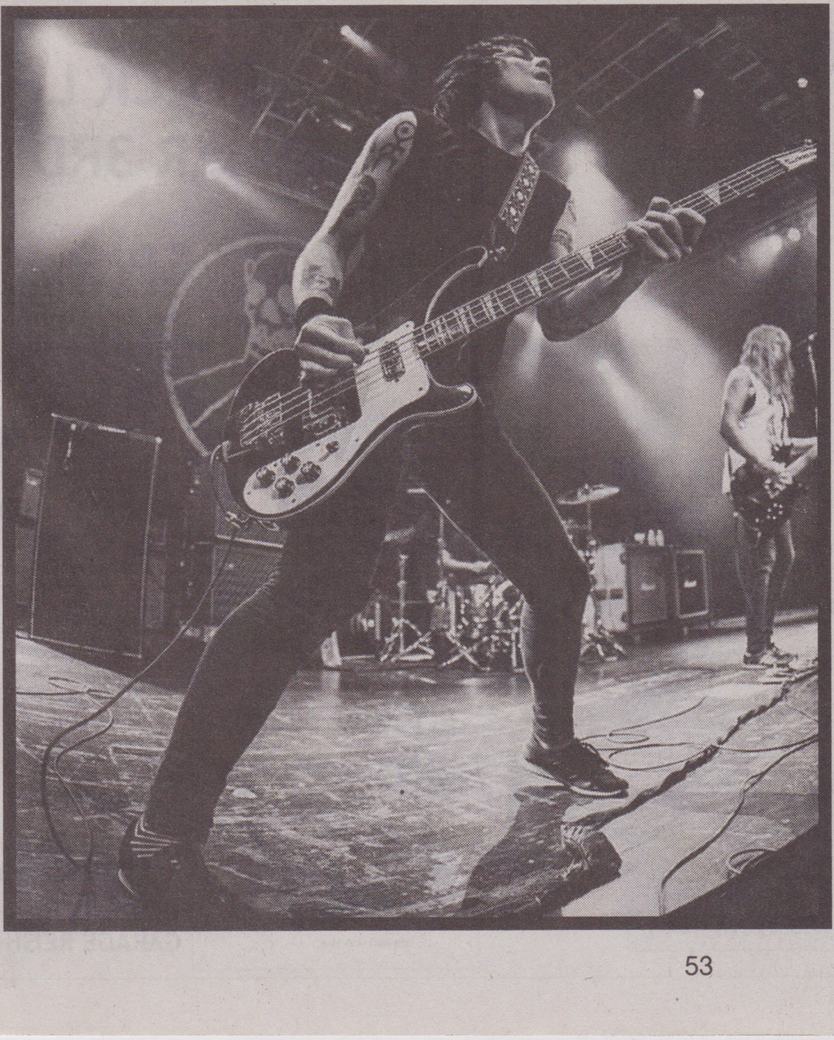
The other guys are doing the same thing they been doing since we quit...drinking.

MRR: Ted, You do all the recording for Bring The Drones at your Blue Elephant studio. Is it difficult to get different perspectives when you're involved in the writing, recording, and mixing of tracks? It must be a lot of pressure. How long have you run the studio for?
Ted: The studio has been around since 2004. When Bring The Drones record we enter the studio with a couple of riffs and bang out the double of the songs. It's usually over in a day. It's not a complicated process. Most of the time goes into mixing it. That's where there the guilt and doubting comes in plays.

MRR: What's the writing and recording process like for Bring The Drones? With some geographical spread between the members it can't be that straightforward. Or do you do stuff via email or Skype? I guess technology makes these kind of collaborations easier.
Charlie: The internet is essential to our process. Usually Ted has some kind of riff and I come to the studio and we try to make something of it. Then we talk about how to proceed, who's to sing and play bass etc. We send the tracks to those involved. Then nothing happens for six months and then repeat (This doesn't apply to James). Two weeks before release we send the tracks to the third bass player, because the first two sucked or didn't learn the songs.
Ted: We meet a couple of times a year, record the songs. After Charlie and I record the songs, James writes the lyrics, it's a winning concept.

Denis: I usually have a few notes or lyrics or ideas hanging around and when I'm asked to contribute vocals I go down to Ted's place and try to make something out of it.
James: I went over to Sweden a couple of times in 2016 to record vocals for album tracks. Sometimes Charlie and Ted send me something in advance that they've recorded already and ask me to do something with it—"Nuclear Fucker," "A Cavalcade of Bastards" and "Ignore the Bodies" were done like that—other times we get to the studio, they arrange some riffs, I have to write the lyrics in the ten minutes it takes them to record the guitar and drums and then I do the vocal…it's really quick. It's the complete opposite of how I write for the Domestics, which is very thought out, with all the songs demoed in full at home and given to the rest of the band in an almost finished form that we then tweak in rehearsal for several months before we record.
Inge: I would love to record a session together with Bring The Drones instead of having everyone involved working in separate studios all the time. But for that to happen we would need a teleporter. Ted knows a bit more about those devices than I do.
Frida: I received the songs one week in advance, listened through them, and then tried them out in the studio. It's very different process from what I'm used to and maybe helpful to hold back the thousands of riff ideas that can mess with me sometimes and run me over. [*laughter*]

MRR: This record is out on Phobia Records in the Czech Republic and Kibou Records in the UK. Kibou Records is your label, James, is that right? How did you end up being *in* the Bring the Drones *and* co-releasing this album? You seem like a busy guy.
James: Yeah, Kibou is my label and I am one of the busiest people I know! [*laughter*] To be honest, the previous Bring The Drones records haven't been heard that widely, in the UK at least, and I'm hoping to change that with this album.



MRR: Are you into other types of music outside of punk / hardcore? I always think it's fascinating to see what kind of unexpected stuff people are into. Tell us about your other musical interests outside of what people would naturally associate you with, if any.
Charlies: Oh, loads! I listen to a lot of varied music. Bluegrass, country, rock, folk, classical, film music, musical, noise...if it's good, I'm listening to it!
Ted: Not associated with Drones: Union Carbide Productions, Trans Am, The Scientist, Television, Archers of Loaf, Fireside, Mission of Burma, Gang of Four, the Kinks.
Denis: Country, blues, British invasion, '50s rock'n'roll, prog, folk, most types of punk, stoner, doom, metal...
James: Yeah, I love loads of different music. I DJ roots and dub reggae, northern soul, '60s r&b and the raw end of funk and I'm also into some old school hip-hop, electronic stuff, '60s garage…fuckin' all sorts…but also plenty of punk and hardcore from all over the world.
Inge: A good song is a good song! But over the last few years my main musical passion has been rap from the U.K— Kate Tempest, Sleaford Mods, the Streets, MIA and stuff like that. I've played in bands ranging in styles from D-beat to mod garage to electronica. I want my life to be about meeting interesting people to create and share with, and Bring The Drones is no exception to that way of doing stuff.
Frida: Oh, yeah, I enjoy listening to lots of different music. It can be the nerve in someone's voice or the mood in harmonies or punch in the rhythm that could catch me. And just like Charlie I can also find this in many different genres.

MRR: OK, to wrap this up, what's next for Bring The Drones? Anything else we've not covered that you want to add? Where can people get your stuff?
Charlie: Haven't got a faintest clue! On all three questions! I leave that to the other guys!
Ted: At the moment we're finishing a new 7".
Denis: Plans are for posers, conspiracy theorists, and freaks!
James: No idea. I just await the call to do what I do and I'll keep doing it until the calls dry up! [*laughter*]
Inge: More music!

For songs and more info see facebook.com/bringthedrones.

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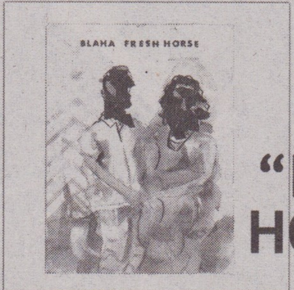

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"FRESH HORSE"

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SITES N' SOUNDS
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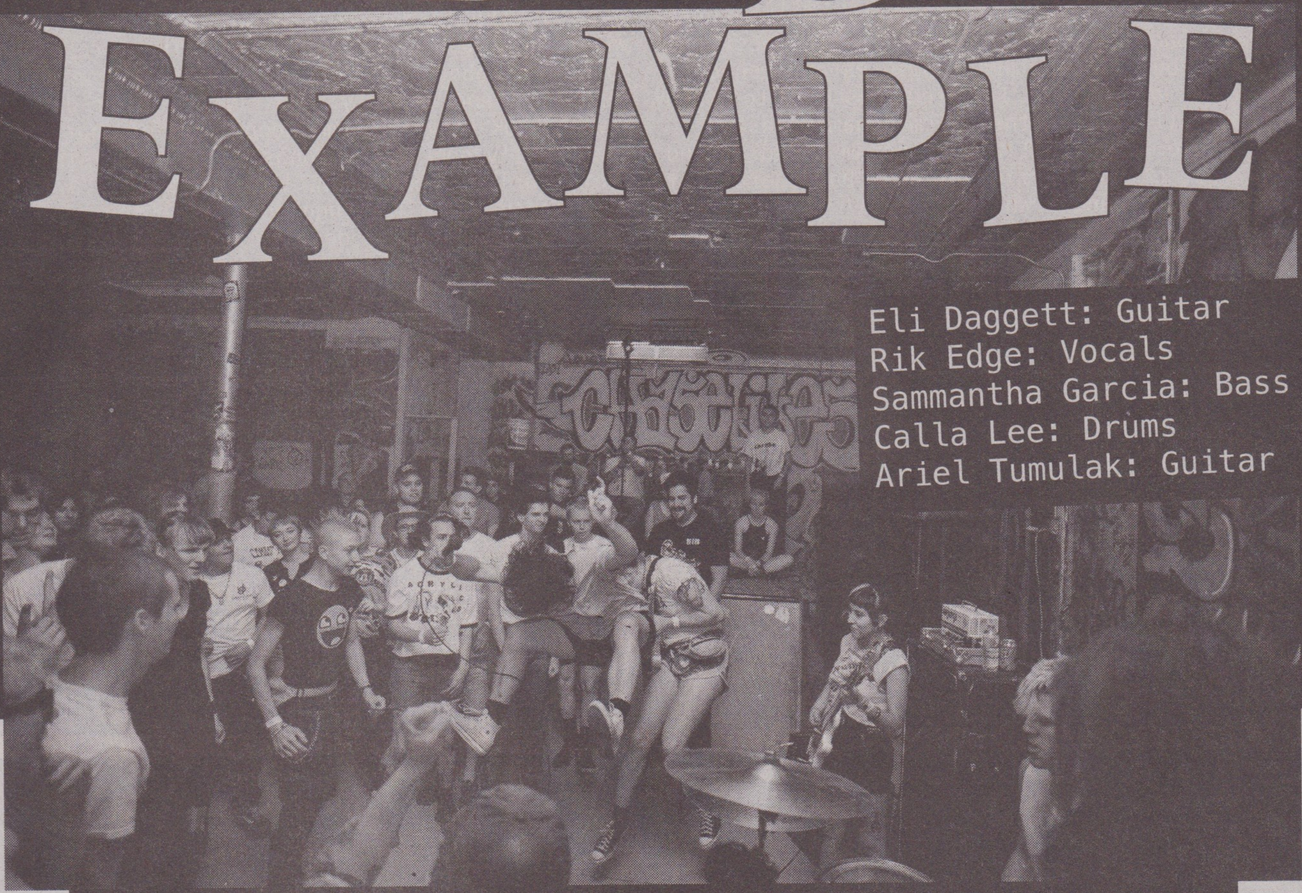
BAD EXAMPLE



Eli Daggett: Guitar
Rik Edge: Vocals
Sammantha Garcia: Bass
Calla Lee: Drums
Ariel Tumulak: Guitar

Introduction and interview by Joan DeToro.

Photos provided by Kris Carter, Will Mecca, and Veronica Mullen.

I first saw Bad Example open for Warm Bodies in Hattiesburg, Mississippi in the summer of 2016. Over the course of their ten minute set, this gang of misfits managed to make an entire room of sweaty, overheated, and exhausted punks wiggle and wobble through the sheer energy of their music and stage presence. I later found out that the members of Bad Example are extremely active in their hometown of Birmingham, Alabama. In between their regular tours, they are performing in one of their many other bands. Indeed, they are a veritable who's who of the Birmingham punk scene, with members currently playing in Laughing Sword, Spirit Of The Science, Heavy User, Faux Deep, and Snake Church. We caught up with the members of Bad Example at the end of a recent tour through the South.

MRR: How did Bad Example form?
Rik Edge: Ariel had some riffs written and asked me to yell over them. Soon I heard Calla and Eli were jamming this stuff with Ariel. They sent me some songs that were originally on synth. We had a couple of practices under the name NuFO. It was kind of like the D-beat version of the Screamers before we knew who the Screamers were. That lineup only played one show at a Laundromat. When we decided to add bass, we asked Sam to join and she pretty much learned to play bass for this band. Our first show was at the Porn Hall in Hattiesburg, Mississippi with Ariel and me's old band Fad, Big Bleach, Baghead, the Limbos, and Criminal Slang.
Sammantha Garcia: That was last May!

MRR: That's a pretty big change in sound then! Why did you make such a stylistic shift?
Ariel Tumulak: The call of the slam.
Calla Lee: I think at some point Rik said, "Let's just play hardcore" and we all sighed in relief.

MRR: Birmingham has a pretty long history of punk and hardcore bands. How do you feel you fit into that lineage? Were there any local bands that you looked up to?

Ariel: For me it's any band that comes thru wit' tha riffs

Rik: There have been a few really awesome punk hardcore bands from Birmingham. The biggest one is Deism, but I also love Exposures and Legion.

Sammantha: Personally, I wanted this band to stand out from all of the other Birmingham bands.

Rik: People joke about a Birmingham sound around here. Most of the Birmingham punk bands are just dark hardcore bands. Which is cool!

Rik: For a while, a lot of the older people here who grew up being into screamo or metal were playing in hardcore bands.

Ariel: I think that's the natural result of being in a place that is in between Atlanta, Florida, Nashville, and Mississippi.

Rik: ...But I guess what really is different for us is that we all really listen to youth crew and I guess it comes out in our songs.

MRR: Does Bad Example agree with any of the ideals behind a lot of youth crew songs?

Calla: Rik's lyrics can be very "think for yourself, don't take any bullshit" which you can find roots for in youth crew. For example, "How U Freak" is an anti fetish-shaming / sexuality positivity song about being true to what you dig and who you are and not taking any bullshit about it!

Sammantha: They are dark but with a positive twist. We like Youth Of Today a lot.

Rik: Youth crew all has a sense of urgency that I've always related to. A lot of my lyrics are about trying to make sense of passive attitudes, and trying to be a better person. The more recent songs are about dealing with insecurities with sexuality and anxiety. The lyrics also discuss how it's OK to write some people out of your life. Specifically one of the songs is about my sister's death earlier this year. We didn't have a great relationship and I struggled to make sense of the grief I was feeling despite how much we didn't get along.

MRR: Did that help you deal with the trauma of the loss of your sister?

Rik: It definitely has helped me express how I feel. I can bottle in negative feelings a lot because I don't usually enjoy bumming people out. I needed that outlet though. My parents are dealing with grief a lot worse than I am and I don't want them to worry about me so I'm trying to deal with things in a positive way.

MRR: I understand that you're not the other person in Bad Example to go through a traumatic experience recently...

Calla: Birmingham has lost several good souls

in the trans-anarchist community and the music scene, so just about everyone who has had a hand in Birmingham music has really had a fucking year. I lost my best friend and gay crush Zeke, who played in the only queercore band in Birmingham history, Group 11, and was also the first trans person in my life. Birmingham has had it really tough this year and seeing everyone set differences aside and continue to be creative has been encouraging amidst the bullshit.

Sammantha: I think that as a band with marginalized people we all have gone through bullshit this year. We relate better to each other because we are aware that we all have our own struggles that we are going through. Staying creative and having fun and active with this band really helps us stay in a better state of mind.

Calla: One thing I do like about this band is that everyone is marginalized to some degree. We have a really really tight bond that makes blissful tours with absolutely no fights or bickering, and we snuggle a lot in the van too!

Sammantha: This band really came at the right time for all of us I think, so it's been good to have this tight group of friends who wanna play hardcore together.

Ariel: Music, literature, zines, recordings, revolutionary artwork, protests, boycotts, squatting, vandalism, and property destruction are all pretty much things I use to distract from / better help process life shoveling shit into my mouth. Anything promoting nonconformity, opposition to mainstream culture and the status quo. Anything to let out the aggression, rebellion, and individualism that we all know is inside us. You know, political messages and anti-big business shit. Rocker shit.

Calla: Also, I had a conflict at a Richard Spencer protest a while back. I got into a tussle with a Nazi who was associated with some Neo-Confederate organization and got arrested at the protest. I will refrain from saying too much about the experience because I was doxxed under my former name by hometown news sites as well as loads of alt-right lowlifes on Twitter. There were thousands of tweets after the protest saying horrible transphobic comments, releasing my family's address, Birmingham Nazis tweeting about seeing me around. It was generally a bad, traumatic time, but of course I don't regret my actions. If you find yourself in a similar situation, just don't be an idiot and post about it on social media afterwards because your ass will get doxxed as fuck! Thanks to my Bad Example honeys for looking after my safety on tour and to Eli for keeping an eye on alt-right haircut normies at shows. Also shout out to Infowars for covering my incident!

MRR: Calla, your experience sounds truly awful! What happened to you after all of this went down?

Calla: It gave me the necessary push to decide on a new name which was a long time coming. Some alt-right twitter honey made a dank meme about me with a pre-transition photo and a post transition photo, captioned "STOP THE COLLEGE MIND VIRUS." It actually made me laugh, but also *bitches I need to get my GED still so the joke's on you*! I shouldn't say too much more so I don't get re-doxxed though because that shit isn't fun!

MRR: Can you all tell me about any negative experiences you've had since the band formed that happened because of your identities?
Rik: I personally haven't had negative experiences from external sources other than my own familial ones when it comes to my queer identity. I'm not too talkative about being queer on social media. But it is something I can't really talk about with my family because I know it stresses them out and they would rather tip toe around it.
Calla: Getting a job or existing while being trans can be difficult in the deep south. No one truly gets it anywhere, but in Birmingham, people *truly* don't get it. There is a lot of feminism 101 going on here. I like the nook I've found my friends in through the hardcore punk scene here where we can collectively roast our surroundings. Resources for starting HRT here is also a nightmarish process if you're not loaded (which I'm sure is applicable everywhere). The doctors who prescribe here tend to be gatekeeping creepy men. Damn, now I've just started shit talking on my city and other people are going to share it and be upset about it. I do like this city a whole lot, but when I think about personal struggles I think about the struggle of being trans in the deep south. Like bless your god damn gay *heart* if you're trans and homeless down here.

MRR: It seems that Bad Example is a general positive experience for you despite those difficulties. And it seems that other people agree. Mario from Klout just put out your newest tape—can you tell me about how that came about? What has the reaction to the tape generally been like?
Sammantha: Mario is a friend of ours. He approached us and told us he was interested in putting the tape out on Not For You and we were more then happy to do so. The overall reaction has been really great! When we toured on *Tethered In Deviancy* the people who saw us or had not heard our music before really seemed to like the new songs. I think that tape shows who we are as a band, how we have progressed as a band, and what we are trying to do. The songs themselves are a good representation of our band but our live set truly shows who we are, what we do and the music we want to put out. I'm really proud of the songs that we have. The shows we played on our tour this past summer showcased our music and we played some of the best sets we have ever played.

MRR: So what's next for Bad Example? What goals do you have?
Rik: We are currently writing more songs and hopefully we will put out an LP next year at some point. As far as touring goes, we are planning a tour for January. Our goal is to do as much as we can and to see the whole US.
Sammantha: Cover more ground. Keep touring. Put a record out.

MRR: What are the best active bands in Alabama right now?
Eli Daggett: G.N.A.R.B. and Black Hole Kids are two of my favorite Alabama bands right now.
Calla: Heavy User and Joyboy are some of my favorites right now!
Rik: Laughing Sword—Calla and Eli just don't want to brag!

MRR: Any last words?
Rik: We'd like to give a special shoutout to our close friend Ryan Fetter for taking us on tour and filling in on drums and being a huge inspiration. Also shoutout to all of the badass punk shit going on in the South right now.
Sammantha: A true honorary baddie forever. Thanks to all our friends all over for their support. Stay bad.

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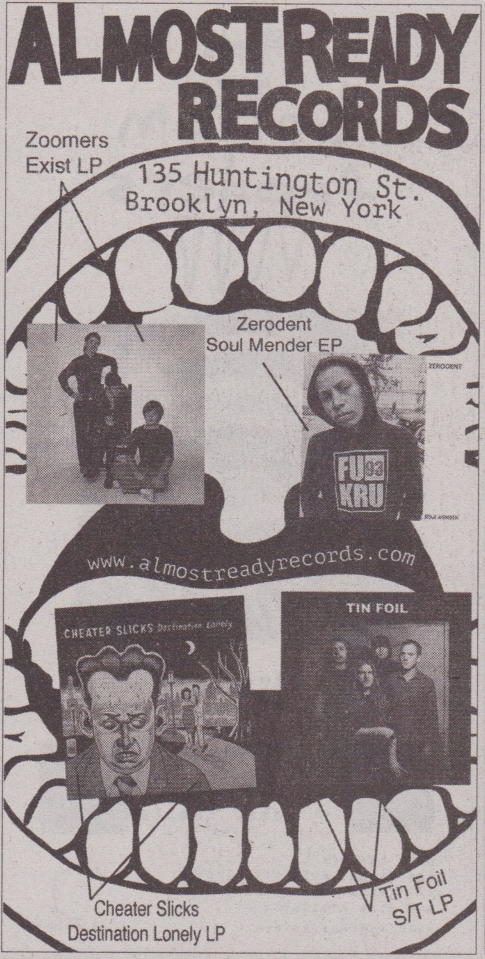

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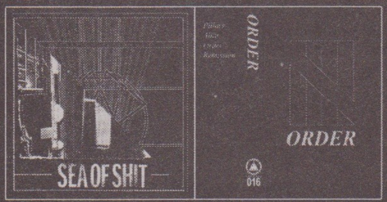

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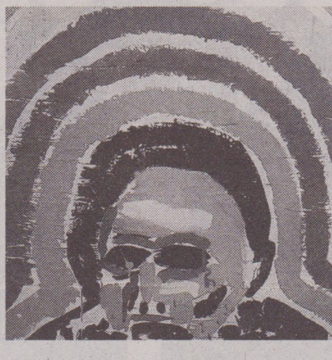

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CANKRO

Introduction and interview by Juliana Almeida. Art by Xavero and Bacellar.

Cankro formed in March 2017 and will soon take their sound throughout the USA straight from the streets of São Paulo, Brazil. Since São Paulo has a long tradition in punk, it's always cool to see new faces and sounds coming from there. In this interview we talk with members Xavero, Bacellar, and Renato about being weirdos, living in São Paulo, and the dark times we've been living in.

ACORDO E PENSO NO QUE FIZ, NEM SEMPRE BEM PENSADO JULGO EU
SEMPRE ACHEI BIZARRO SE IMPORTAR COM O OUTRO NO CASO, VAI
PRA SER MAIS SUPRINDO A NEUROSE REFLETINDO
FODA-SE
I DON'T CARE
WHY YOU CARE?
NO RULES
FUCK YOU

MRR: Why did you folks start Cankro?
Xavero: I had some riffs for a while that I later used in this band, but it's always hard to find people with the free time to start a band in the hardcore punk scene in São Paulo. Most of my friends are involved with electronic projects or DJing right now, so it was hard. One day when I was hammered in a party, Bacellar (the bass player) was there and I told him, "Let's fucking play music, dude, I need it, I'm going crazy in this city!" So he was down and we called our homie Renato and asked him to play drums. He said yes, we had like three practices and recorded our first demo.
Bacellar: It was an old idea, we were wired at a party one day, and scheduled the first practice!
Renato: We were all into starting a band and releasing some energy, we started playing and things started working out well!

MRR: What does punk mean to you?
Xavero: Punk for me is like freedom, being able to do everything by yourself, learning anything you want and seeing the world in a different way. Seeing people as human beings, without borders, connecting with everyone no matter what color, gender, race or social class they are.
Bacellar: It's where all the weird kids who don't know each other can release their anger and frustrations through hardcore music, side by side.
Renato: It's chaos in the heart and despair in the city…

MRR: Why do you play music?
Xavero: Because it's a good way to get all my frustration out of my body, my crazy ideas and everything. I feel like if I weren't playing music I would be even crazier than I am! [*laughter*]
Bacellar: The first form of rebellion I found when I was growing up in the '90s was punk rock music. I still believe in it and that's the reason why.
Renato: I play music so I can chill from life.

MRR: Do you feel like outcasts? Why or why not?
Xavero: Growing up in São Paulo is hard sometimes. I came from a poor neighborhood so everybody in my family and even people from outside the family have a lot of expectations for me. Sometimes we don't have plans for our lives. Music and art are a good escape sometimes, but people don't take it seriously like I do, so it's easy to feel like an outcast in a place where everyone try to win everyday, if you know what I mean.
Bacellar: Because we hate the system, the mainstream, we even hate the punk scene when it starts to act like ideological police. We are nihilistic junkies who don't think we're gonna save any shit, no vocation to be heroes
Renato: Yes, in a certain way, we are what the city turned us into, and no one likes to look at themselves in the mirror.

MRR: What are Trump / Temer times like for you?
Xavero: They are the worst enemies of the people, for sure. Sometimes I can't understand what is going on in this world. I don't know if it's social media and people just sharing and believing in everything on it or if it has always been like that, but now we can see their real faces.
Bacellar: Crazy ones, definitely. Fascism is shamelessly out there, corruption is going crazy, everyone is broke, hate is trending…Being in the streets every day is more aggressive than ever.
Renato: They are just two assholes. The problems have always been there, such as fascists, racists, and inequality, but in the past people were ashamed of speaking their mind and now they are supported by the media and conservative politicians.

MRR: What do you like / hate most about São Paulo?
Xavero: I love São Paulo. It's a crazy town. You can do anything, anytime. I hear people talking about NYC like "the city that never sleeps"…Naaah I've seen NYC "sleep" but not São Paulo, no way! There's stuff going everyday, art and music. The street life is really intense there and you can get lost really easily. But I hate the fact that sometimes the city drags you down, it gives you a lot but i's cruel sometimes. Everything here is far away and expensive, so there's a lot going on but not for everybody…I guess most big cities are like that.
Bacellar: The chaos. It feels so damn good to be in the city at night, among its creatures and vices. This tough and crazy life is very inspiring. On the other hand, the same stuff consumes all of your energy every day. It makes everyone angry and our lives miserable.
Renato: Things work better in São Paulo jobwise and other stuff. This is good but quality of life is really bad. People are always afraid of everything, but not us!

MRR. So I know Xavero lives in USA now (he also plays in

Sem Hastro from Washington, DC), so what is it like to play in a punk band in US and Brazil? What are the differences?
Xavero: I think Americans are more into music, they are more like nerds about hardcore punk in general and to be honest I love that...People put a lot of effort to make a gig happen. Everything is harder for us in São Paulo, no one can afford a backline, we don't have DIY spaces, so that makes everything more slow. But when we do stuff it's always sick, even parties with bands playing, this is the classic São Paulo style now. But I know there's a lot of different scenes in the city.

MRR. Xavero: what are the differences between the punk scenes in São Paulo and Washington DC?
Xavero: Most of my friends in São Paulo are adults now, so sometimes it's more about partying and hanging out, and not so much about bands and trying to do something bigger together...Maybe it's just a phase, I don't know. In DC there's a scene and it's really organized and people don't party that hard but all the shows are sick. So I miss partying sometimes, but I love to see new bands from all over the world playing here.

MRR. At this point most punks in the US know about classic Brazilian punk like Colera, Olho Seco, Ratos de Porão and it's impossible not to be impacted by these bands if you're a punk in São Paulo. But what other bands / scenes in São Paulo had a deep impact on you to start playing music?
Xavero: Definitely Discarga and I Shot Cyrus. Both bands changed my life when I was younger.
Bacellar: Psychic Possessor, Garage Fuzz, I Shot Cyrus...
Renato: Test, Ulster e Deaf Kids (before the electronic phase).

MRR. Tell us about the band's artwork, who does it? What's the inspiration behind it?
Xavero: Usually the ideas come from the fact that we live in São Paulo. It serves as my inspiration when I write the songs with those guys too. The artwork is about chaos, sleeplessness, wildness and trying to survive in this Babylon. That's why I'm here (in DC) all the time, so I can take a break from São Paulo!
Bacellar: Me and Xavero do it. The inspiration is always the big city chaos, the pain, and the thrill.

MRR. Name one Brazilian band from nowadays that people should check it out!
Xavero: Urutu!
Bacellar: Crise!
Renato: Perception!

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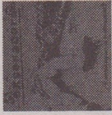

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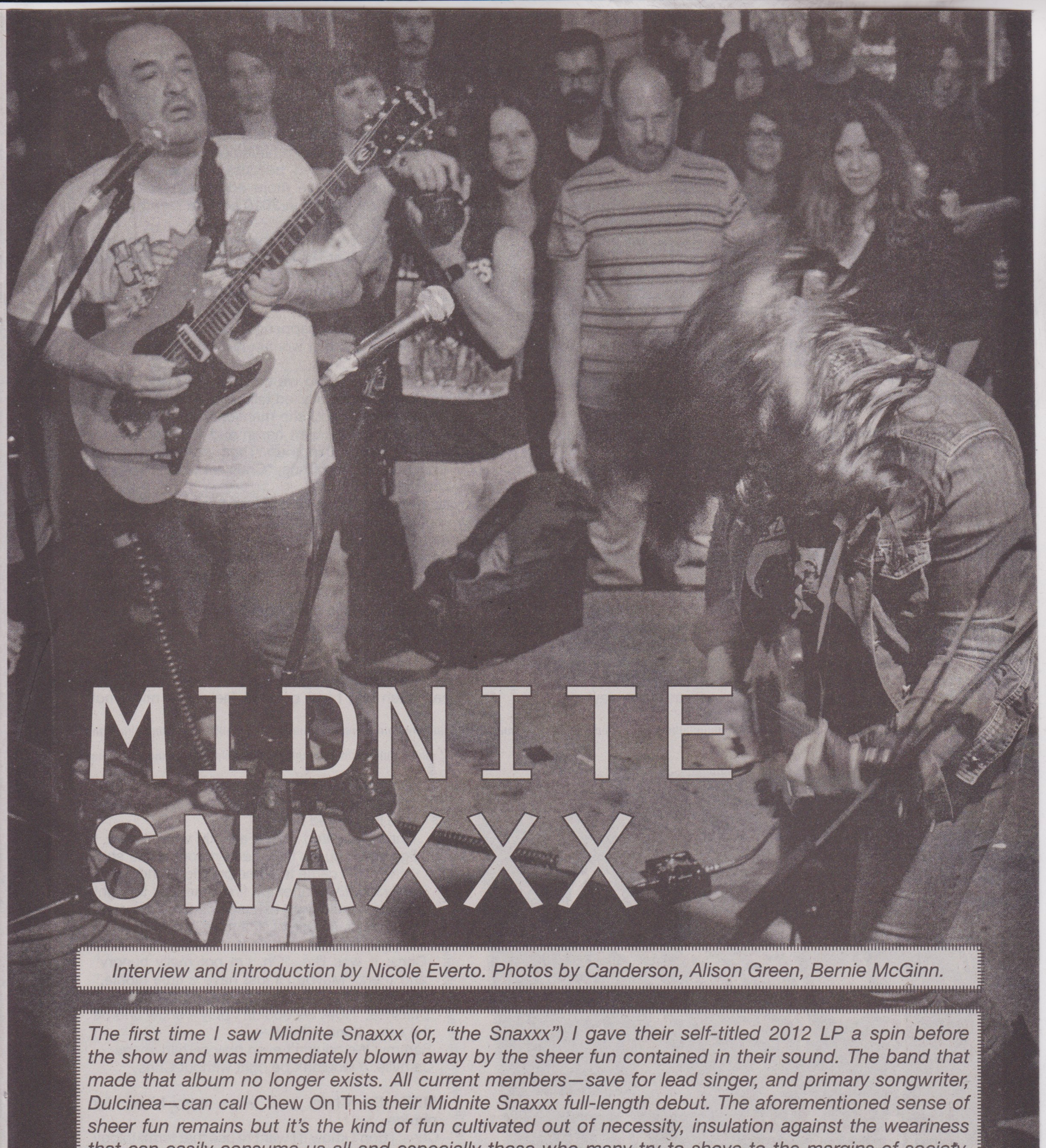


MIDNITE SNAXXX

Interview and introduction by Nicole Everto. Photos by Canderson, Alison Green, Bernie McGinn.

The first time I saw Midnite Snaxxx (or, "the Snaxxx") I gave their self-titled 2012 LP a spin before the show and was immediately blown away by the sheer fun contained in their sound. The band that made that album no longer exists. All current members—save for lead singer, and primary songwriter, Dulcinea—can call Chew On This *their Midnite Snaxxx full-length debut. The aforementioned sense of sheer fun remains but it's the kind of fun cultivated out of necessity, insulation against the weariness that can easily consume us all and especially those who many try to shove to the margins of society. The sonic landscape of the band's output has subtly expanded—some song topics are more explicitly serious and they're further boosted by the addition of a second guitar, not to mention bass lines that bounce between supporting character and lead role. The importance of solidarity to the Snaxxx became increasingly obvious as we talked roots (past and present) and why representation matters, maybe now more than ever, across race and age lines.*

MRR: Let's start with a mini-biography. Your name, what you play, when you joined the band.
Sammy: I'm Sammy, I come up with the drum beats...I don't really do anything else! *[laughter]*

MRR: Who needs drums! [laughter] So, how long have you been playing in the Snaxxx?
Sammy: I've been playing the drums for probably like twenty years. I've been in Midnite Snaxxx for probably about two years now?
Camylle: More than that! I've almost been in it for two years.
Sammy: Oh, wow, then three? Three and a half? Four years.
Camylle: I play bass and am relatively new.
Dulcinea: You're not new anymore.
Camylle: That is in all aspects of my life—I am not new anymore. I am the old new person.

MRR: You picked up bass for the band, right? How is that going, now that you're two years deep?
Camylle: I did. It's going pretty good. I'm in another band; I sing for B.D. or Bad Daddies and I actually write songs on bass, but it's was just at home, messing around. I've never played bass live for any band before the Snaxxx.

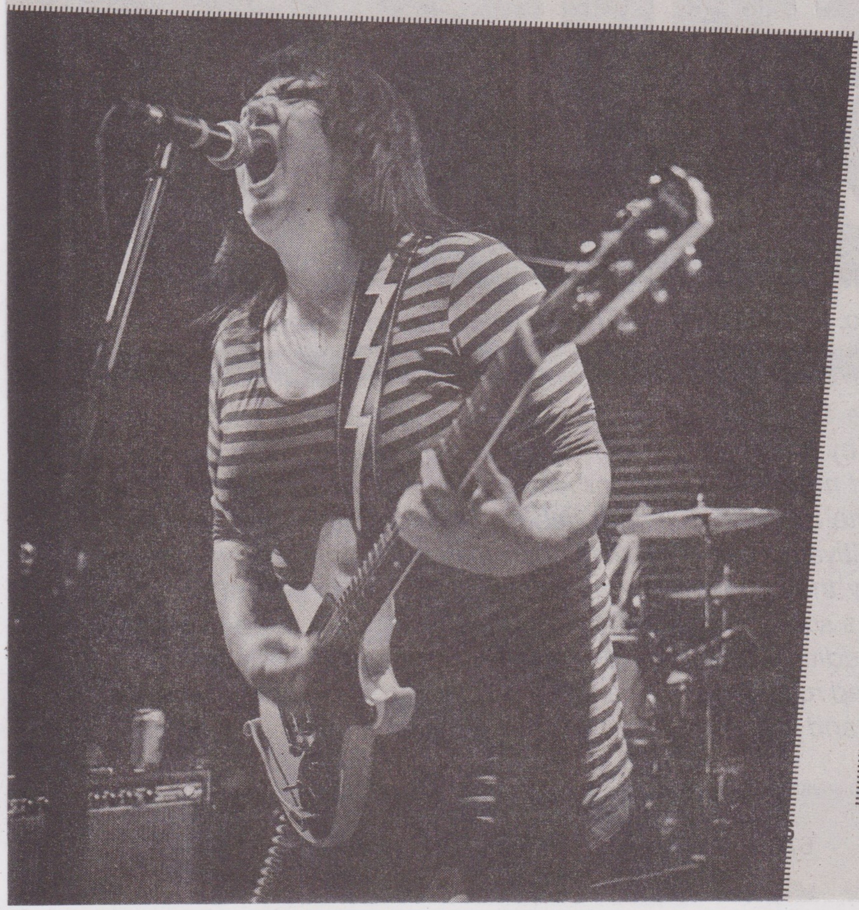
MRR: How are you feeling about playing bass and singing at the same time?
Camylle: It's hard but it's a different level with the Snaxxx. Dulcinea had a whole vision for me anyways.
Dulcinea: Her bass lines are a lot more intricate than they were in the past so for her to be able to do a backing vocal and do what she's doing is, it can be intense...I don't even know if I could do what she does. But I ask her to do it and somehow she figures it out. A lot of times she's playing a melody on the bass that is opposite of what I'm doing.

I'm the OG of Midnite Snaxxx, and I write the songs. This has been the third lineup of Midnite Snaxxx and I think the strongest. The songs have been able to become more complex and layered because we have another guitar player and we have more advanced bass lines, more melodies. We started in 2010 and we recorded our first LP in 2012
Camylle: The first time I saw the Snaxxx is when they played with the Zeros at The Uptown. I was so intimidated, I thought they ruled.
Sammy: Little did you know you'd be in the band. It was fate.
Dulcinea: Basically what happened was, we were a three piece: me, Sammy, and a woman named Renee. Renee left to pursue other things.

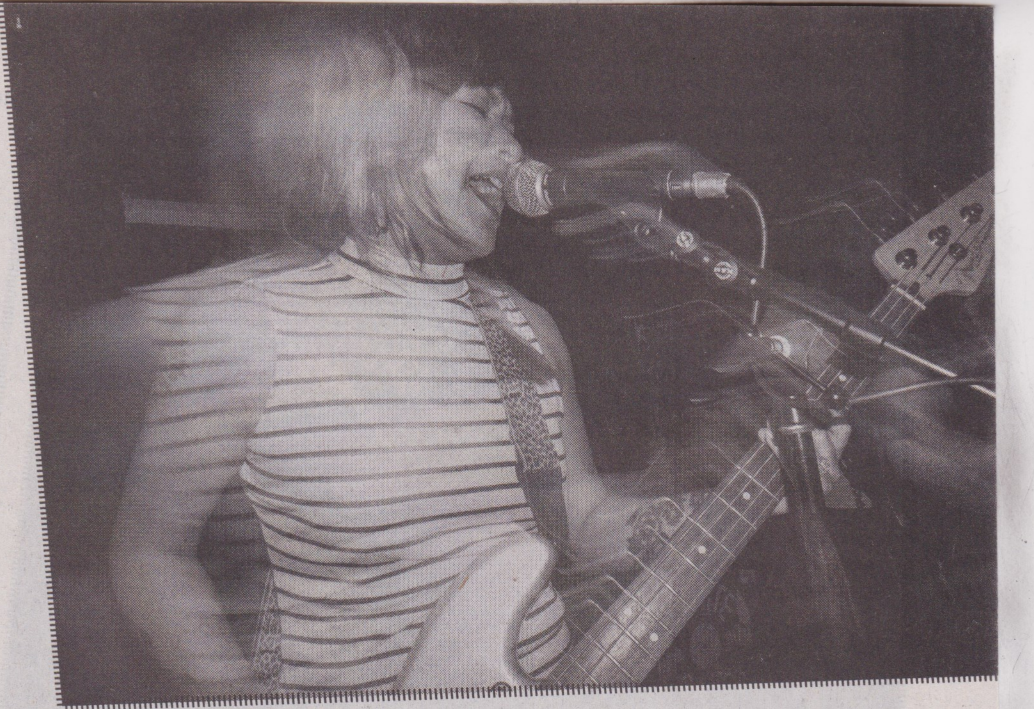
At that point it was, "Do we continue the band?" That was a quick yes. Then I started talking to Camylle, asking if she knew anybody and she mentioned that she kinda played bass. So we brought her in and that became an opportunity to switch things up. Then we brought Chris in. I kind of bamboozled Chris, "Chris, why don't you just come and record with us?"
Camylle: He's like, "Sure, I'll come and record but I don't know about playing any shows."
Dulcinea: We had the material for an album that I was super antsy to record. Once we had all the right players, that was our main goal. We recorded in a couple days, but the process took a whole year to come out which is why.

I thought about Chris but I wasn't sure if he wanted to play music or be in a band.

MRR: Why was there a question?
Camylle: It had been a long time.
Dulcinea: Yeah and I just got that feeling he might not want to so I had to trick him. I put out a little bit of cheese on the mouse trap and he ate it and he wanted more.
Chris: *[laughter]* That's exactly what it was. I figured, "I guess I'll try and record some stuff with you." I came to some practices and it was really fun. Even after the first practice I thought maybe I would want to keep doing this because it felt good. A case of "if it feels good, do it."
Camylle: It helps that Chris is nice.
Chris: It was like, "Oh, I'm not really hungry" and then, "Maybe I'll just have a little nibble," and then "Oh, I'm glad I ate that whole thing."
Dulcinea: Now, we couldn't play a show and be the same band without—
Sammy: We couldn't even play certain songs
Camylle: It wouldn't be right without Chris.



MRR: So Chris, you were semi-hired, by choice.
Chris: I don't know if I want to use that terminology but maybe, yeah. I just didn't really...I mean, I like music, I still played music by myself and a little bit with other people but not so much. The thought of being in a band was confusing.
Dulcinea: Well that'd be serious, right? No commitments!
Chris: No commitments! And the ones I did have,



there were big gaps between them where I didn't have to worry about stuff. So maybe that was a bit of a concern but now it's what keeps me sane.

MRR: Are you all from California and / or the Bay Area?
Chris: I'm from Los Angeles.
Dulcinea: Me too. I've been in the Bay since… '91 or '92? Whenever I go back to Los Angeles I feel like, "I'm very Bay Area." I mean I like to visit but I don't feel as connected as I—
Chris: I feel the same way. I mean, I miss Los Angeles, my mom is still there. Every time I go back it's weirdly different. I've been living here now for fifteen years...ish.
Camylle: I recently moved back to the Bay Area. I went to school here in the early 2000s. I grew up in a small farming town on the way up to Yosemite, then I went to school up here, moved down to LA for a couple of years, then back to the Central Valley and now I'm living in the Bay Area again. It took us a long time to get back—twelve years.
MRR: Did you play music when you were back down there?
Camylle: No, my husband has always played music and I've always loved music of course, but I never even thought about being in a band until my 30s. Never really felt the need to do it til my 30s.

MRR: I think that's more common now—people starting creative pursuits "later." From 30s to 90s!
Camylle: I think it's because there are more role models, too. You see more people doing it and you think that maybe you can and you just do it. That's my experience: you decide to do something and you do it. I started in Stockton.

MRR: Oh! How was playing in Stockton versus Oakland?
Camylle: It was different, completely different! I lived in Stockton for nine years of my adult life and it was really depressing. It was not easy to live in Stockton, it's was a rarity to meet anyone who actually liked living there, and it came to a point where we wanted out. So that's probably one of the main reasons why we started a band, my other band with my husband. It was out of frustration and a need for release.

Stockton has a lot of violent crime and a lot of social and economic issues. I have two kids and it was really difficult to have a family there. It was clear that we didn't want to stay there but when you start a family and you try to establish yourself, it's really hard to pick up and move. So it took us awhile to get out of there but we did. Living in the Bay is great, it was great for my other band but it also let me connect to things I wanted to do—it let me become exposed to things I was more interested in.

MRR: It sounds like the community here is better.

Dulcinea: And touring bands will come here!

MRR: Did either of you, Chris or Dulcinea, play music in LA or has it always been up here?
Dulcinea: No, actually, when I moved to SF from LA is when I started my first band, Loudmouths. That was in the '90s and we played for about seven years. We toured Europe and nationally a couple of times. We played locally a lot. So, that was my music career before Midnite Snaxxx.
Chris: I played music in Los Angeles with my childhood friend Vince Guerrero when we were teenagers, then later with him and my sister Michelle Santamaria in Loli & The Chones. We played a couple of times up in the Bay Area, we were fans of Bay Area bands. We'd write, pre-internet, letters to each other then we'd play a show up here. That's eventually how I met Dulce.

MRR: And you, Sammy, you've been playing drums for twenty years...
Sammy: Yeah, so right after high school I moved to San Luis Obispo and I joined a band called the Red Barons with a few of my buddies, who are still my friends today. I did that from the mid-to-late nineties.

Then, I moved to San Diego for a couple of years. That didn't work out. I came up here and started playing in band with my buddy, Mike, from The Red Barons because he had also moved out here. After that, I started playing in a '60s twist band called the Barbary Coasters for a couple of years, then the Ogres. I played in the Ogres / Barbary Coasters for a total of ten years. When Dulcinea asked me to join Midnite Snaxxx I decided it was time for me to leave the Ogres.
Dulcinea: Pretty much, I trick people.
Sammy: The Ogres still play and they are really good and really nice!

MRR: What's your writing process? How do you get started?
Dulcinea: I pretty much write the songs. Sometimes I send the band home recordings to work off of or I will try to come to practice with new songs in various stages of completeness to work on, but now I feel much more

comfortable bringing in unfinished pieces and lettings things evolve in the room. That way, surprising things happen. Things I can't make up on my own. So that's the exciting thing about being in this setup now. Before I would bring a song and everyone would do exactly what I said. There wasn't as much back and forth.

Chris: It seems like the more we play a song the more—

Camylle: We figure out what works better.

Chris: The more dimensions appear.

Sammy: Then, we change it right before we record. [*laughter*]

Camylle: Sometimes Dulcinea writes the lyrics the day of recording and it's always for the best too.

Dulcinea: Yeah, sometimes I'll have an idea of what I want to do and I'm doing it on some level, but I don't feel like I've perfected it or have the right language then I'll leave it until homework's due [*laughs*] and I'm cramming at the end. Then, once it's recorded it's like having a tattoo. It's out there.

MRR: And it'll grow on you!

Dulcinea: Yeah, the mistakes grow on you. If you record a mistake it's like, "Well, now it sounds kind of cool."

Chris: Yeah that's what happens when we record practice. We record it on a phone mic and there's all this static on the recording from the blown-out mic, and that static is what serves as an idea-canvas.

Dulcinea: Or, how the production can sound.

Chris: We hear these mysterious sounds and things that may or may not really exist on the practice recordings then we take those ideas into the next practice and play that game again.

MRR: Camylle, do think coming in as a fan impacts how you write for the band?

Camylle: Honestly, most of my bass lines are written by Dulcinea, I'll have some input or sometimes she'll write me something so hard I'll say, "I physically cannot do this and sing at the same time" so then it changes. Sometimes she's got me up and down the bass and I can't always get there in time so I'll have to do a little move, like a step. It's a challenge.

Dulcinea: But I play three chords!

Camylle: And I have twelve notes going on in every measure [*laughter*].

Chris: It's a good thing, a hunger to reach for notes is what comes out in the recordings.

MRR: It seems like a lot of your evolution comes from your surprises and challenges.

Camylle: Yeah, and usually I try to do it, "I'm going to shut up, practice it, nail it." Because I want it to be right. So it's rare that I have to cut corners but it's okay when you do.

Chris: Yeah, and it's not like we're playing prog or math rock.

Dulcinea: I've brought a calculator to practice!

Camylle: You've seen some of those bass lines!

Chris: What's charming to me is it's a three chord song... we're not like, professional musicians. We hear an idea in our heads and we try to reach for it as best we can. That's where one part of the focus is. Basically, it's whatever sounds good to us regardless if it's accidental or not, that's the intention. It's calculated only by our intuition and limited capabilities combined.

Camylle: And Dulcinea can write the most hard-hitting, three-chord, punk song. Boom. It goes both ways, we have our complex songs and our easier songs but I think they're all great.

MRR: You're not professional musicians?

Chris: No, obviously not.

MRR: Oh, please, explain this to me!

Dulcinea: I know, well, we get paid occasionally so we are professional in that sense I guess. Recently, we were recording and we did something in the recording that wasn't what anyone would think to do and I think even our recording engineer was a little put off by it although he accepted it. I was thinking to myself, "Still an amateur after all these years." [*laughter*]

I guess that's what I love about playing music, aggressive music, edgy music, lyrically, musically: attitude. Because that's my personality and I get real angsty about stuff and it's a really great way for me to express that.

I love to write really kind-of-sweet pop-driven songs and I also love to write really pissed-off songs, but I still try to stay catchy so, in my mind it's this kind of two-headed beast when I write songs because I like both the hard and the soft stuff.

MRR: *Chew on This* is your second LP, and it's good.

You were all here for the second but not the first and I think I can hear how your process has changed but how do you think that is actually reflected in the differences between the two albums?
Dulcinea: The first LP was me, Renee Leal, and Tina Lucchesi and I really like that LP. It does feel a little one dimensional to me but that's what I love about it.

I guess that's the biggest thing—it was three of us. There weren't a lot of other things happening in terms of melody. Bassline-wise there was a little bit but I think I was just getting a grasp of that. It has a great energy, Tina is on drums and she's just a maniac. It was really fun to play with them, we had a good time and we laughed a lot, it was great but it was just a totally different band.

MRR: What would you call the main theme of the new album?
Dulcinea: I feel like it's kind of a blend of a little bit of where the first LP left off and also getting a bit more political. I have songs like "Space Invaders" and "Hey, I'm A Human." The album opens with those two songs stuck together, and it's about living in the Bay and seeing all your friends get pushed out and feeling upset about that. Then also, "Hey, I'm A Human" is a reminder of all of the terrible ways people treat each other—racism, classism, everything you can think of. Feeling frustrated about how I get treated, how I see other people get treated. I think with our next batch of songs it's getting even more political.

MRR: Were those two songs written to be one song or did you happen to notice they worked together?
Dulcinea: I wrote them separately but wanted to merge them because I thought it was just the natural thing. I had recorded them before and they weren't merged.
Sammy: Renee and I outvoted you.
Dulcinea: [*laughs*] Yeah when I was in the band with Sammy and Renee we recorded most of those songs and we played them separately and then later we came back and put them together and they're so much stronger together. Especially the revved up version of leaving "Space Invaders" and getting into "Hey, I'm a Human." I love that. It's like *Mad Max* or something, it's fun.
Chris: I think it happened from writing the setlists. We were connecting those two songs and the question came up of whether we should do that on the record.
Camylle: And it's totally natural.
Dulcinea: To me it's just one song now.

MRR: So, you mentioned you're getting more political.
Camylle: Yeah, after Trump got elected. We went on tour and went through the South and the whole time we were talking about the upcoming elections, and we'd see these Trump signs
Sammy: Handmade!
Camylle: Yeah, hand painted. And I was so convinced, I was like, "Just wait, there is no way Trump is ever going to become President." That is what we talked about the whole time we were on tour, pretty much. And then there were some situations in Alabama, we've had some things happen. We'd stop in some podunk town at Waffle House and have some confederate flag waving truck people come and try to mess with us.
Sammy: They followed us to the gas station and they stared down Chris.
Camylle: Yeah and we're trying to get some food...I was

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like, "This is so ridiculous, just wait. There is no way. We outnumber them."

Chris: Surprise!

Dulcinea: That's our Bay Area bubble.

Camylle: Total bubble. But I thought there was no way it was going to happen: new time, new millennium. What a fucking slap in the face it was. Everyday is a challenge, reading the news everyday is…

MRR: A thing you should not do.

Camylle: Yeah, so depressing but I feel like I have to read the news.

Dulcinea: You also have to take a break. I will say, you know, the band has been a really great outlet. Not even just writing songs about that in particular but just expending that kind of energy.

Camylle: Get together, play some music. And to forget, honestly, just get lost in the music. It's escapism but there's also a message so you can have it both ways.

MRR: I'm making an assumption, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, that all or most of you identify as people of color.

All: Yes.

MRR: Is that intentional?

All: Yes, definitely.

Dulcinea: When I was looking for a bass player I said, "I want a person of a color." It was not easy. It's still not easy.

MRR: Do you think that influences the political nature of the songs you wrote for this album and where you're going? Do you think it would have been the same or harder with members who were not POC?

Dulcinea: I guess it depends on who it was but it was just more of the way I wanted to represent the...represent!... the band to be in a unit where we all have more similar struggles and understand each other without having to really explain too much. I mean, I have many different relationships with many different people but with the band it was something that was important to me.

MRR: And having made that decision pre-Trump, does it feel especially important now?

Dulcinea: Yes. I feel proud about it. Glad that I get to be in a band with these guys and hopefully represent people of color in a way that others can appreciate and feel inspired by. Because I know I was inspired by the Zeros and Alice Bag and others. They're out there but when there's a whole band and they're playing punk rock...there's not that many so it's important.

MRR: Do you think that's important in Oakland, too? It does seem like the scene is fairly white for being in Oakland...I mean, most punk scenes [in the US] are pretty white but...

Camylle: Mmm, you know what's nice about Oakland and the Bay Area is that it's very open and you can very specifically say, "I want to play with queer-friendly, trans-

friendly, POC punks" and it's accepted that that's who you want to play music with. I don't know if you can do that in other places or if there'd be a pushback from that but I think there's an understanding that you want to play with more diverse, different, people.
Dulcinea: And to your point, yes, [the punk scene's] typically dominated by white males, it still is. That's why it's more important than ever for us to be out there, doing what we do, and being who we are.

MRR: Definitely. And to your point Camylle, I think in a lot of places there's lip service paid to that concept and [people are] accepting of the notion that someone might want to be in a band with XYZ but I think it's rare to see it actually happen.
Dulcinea: That's how we tricked Chris! [*laughter*]
Nicole: So on that note, the first time I saw you all play was with Alice Bag which was last summer.
Camylle: Oh! With Quaaludes!

MRR: Yeah! Another local favorite. So, you had that show and you just played with Alice again—how did you all initially connect with her?
Dulcinea: Grace at *Maximum* set up Alice at El Rio and asked us to play. It was.. I mean, playing with Alice is a treat. Here she is like the pioneer of punk rock from Los Angeles and the crowd that came out were a lot of people of color and that was exciting.
Camylle: And a lot of queer women too.
Dulcinea: We got a taste of that and we were like "These are our people! I finally feel at home!"
Camylle: Yeah! "These are the shows we need to be playing." Our last show with Alice.. so, Valleygrrls is a band from San Jose and they're great, they're Chicana, I thought they were a perfect fit. And I got to talk to Alice and she's so down to earth—she's amazing, she's one of the most amazing people I've ever met. To play with her was extraordinary.
Dulcinea: First of all, she was the first and she has all of these really terrific, insightful things because of her experience and she's still doing it and totally relevant!
Camylle: And I also love that she's an intellectual. She's an educator and I'm going to become a teacher so I think she's amazing because she's from East LA. She's stayed in that area, she's worked with students who really need someone like her who is going to be able to work with them, prop them up, work with their native language and support their culture. That's so important in California because there's so many diverse populations here. So I've read what's she written and her music is so amazing. And she still kills it live! I'm putting together a *Typical Girls* compilation for Emotional Response records and I asked her because she's still so relevant and I want her to be part of it.
Dulcinea: It's our multi-generational punk.

MRR: I missed that show because I was down in SoCal for When We Were Young which was similar—multigenerational. It's nice to see people who have been in the punk scene for decades thriving.
Dulcinea: That's how Burger Boogaloo is, too. Mixing brand new and emerging people with the veterans.

MRR: So what's next? Tour?
Dulcinea: We just recorded four songs. We're hoping we get two singles out of them. We also have some new songs we still haven't recorded. We're always working on new stuff. So, continuing to write—which, to me, is one of the best things you get out of being in a band. The creativity, the writing and recording—the process, that's the best.
Then, we want to do a big trip this year. Another amazing thing about being in a band is being able to travel to places you wouldn't otherwise get to and do it as a band.
Chris: We're also lucky enough to all be friends. It's a pleasure to be around each other.
Camylle: We've always had a good time traveling together.

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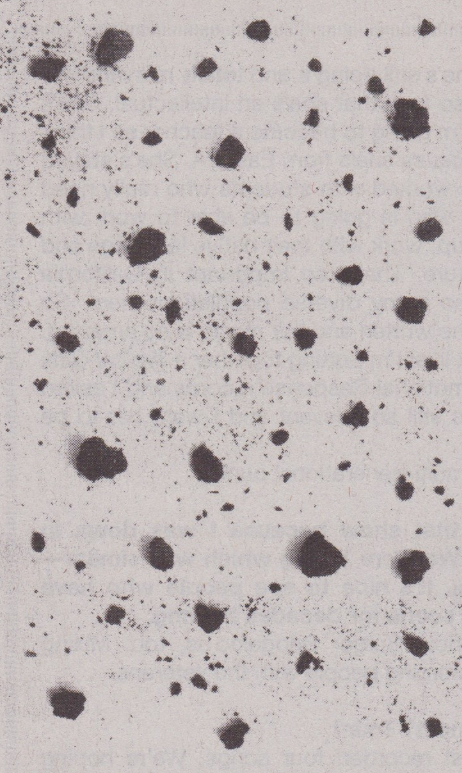

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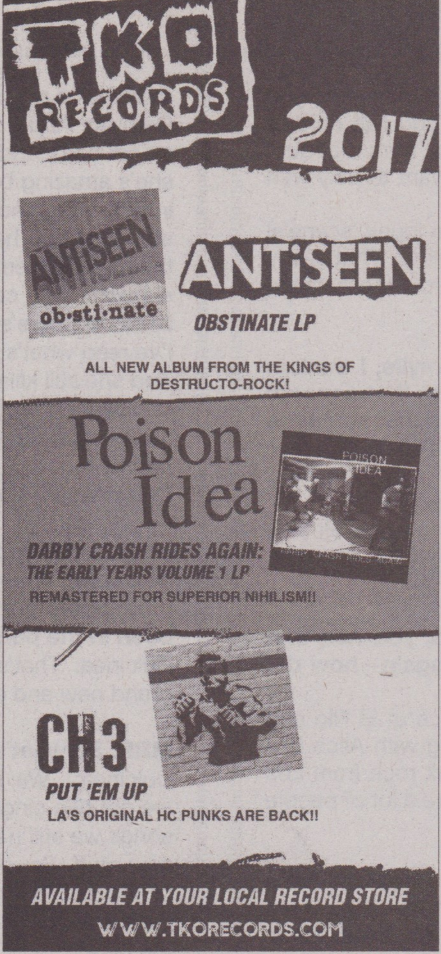

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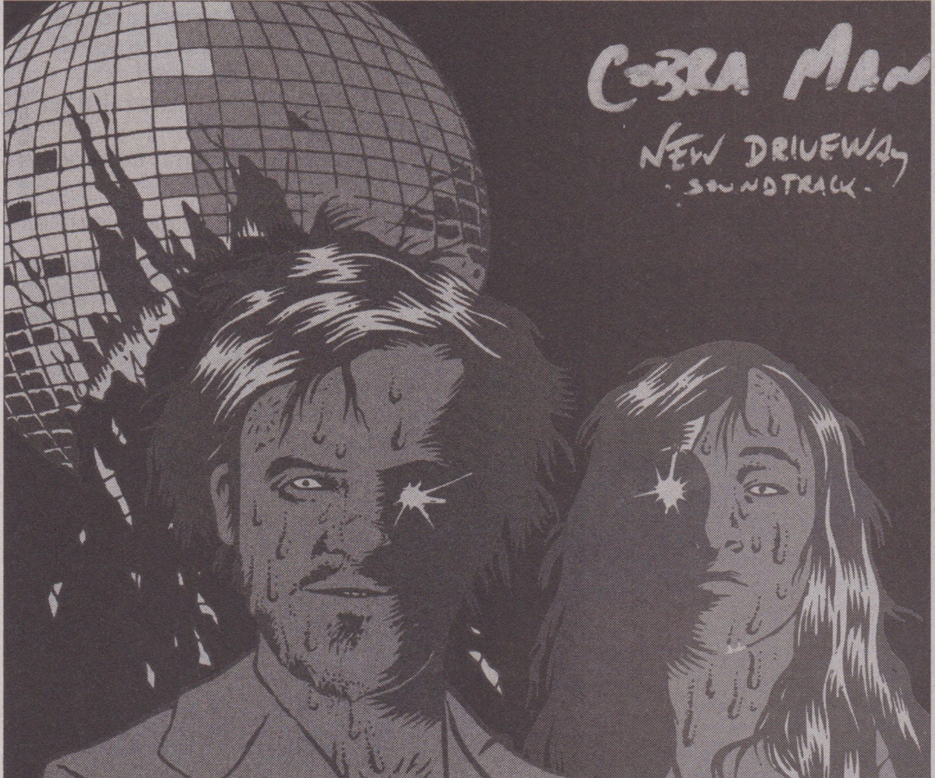

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ALABAMA PUNK

This is the first of a two-part series about the history of punk rock in Alabama by Ian Wise.

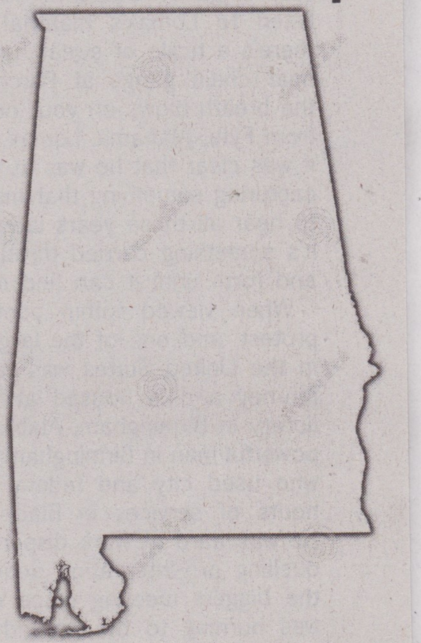
I've moved a lot over the years and a lot of tapes, records, zines, demo CDs, and flyers have been lost along the way. There were dozens of demos from Alabama and Southern bands that I lost and haven't been able to track down again. I wonder how many other audio documents were lost in similar ways, and how many stories we're missing out on. I could have searched forever, but who knows if it would be worth it, and then this never would have seen the light of day. I guess the best way to look at it is that you grow and the things that aren't the most important get left wherever you stopped learning from them. While this collection does not in any way claim to be complete or even comprehensive, it's an accurate depiction of what I remember and the things I wanted to track down. Hopefully those that existed on the fringes of the scenes I chose to document will take it upon themselves to bring their own work and contributions into the light.

All folk histories have arbitrary cut-offs, so for the sake of posterity I've chosen to end this one when I left Alabama in 2010. This cut-off and my departure doesn't imply that things have stopped or even slowed in my absence—I was a blip on the radar in the continuum of Alabama punk—because while I am possibly the biggest proponent of the state's offerings, my participation didn't contribute much.

There is some old mindset within punk that once you are gone the whole scene dies in your absence; that no one can relate to your hardships and you had a heart when no one else did. But the truth is that things will keep going like they always have. Kids are growing up in complicated times and they'll have to grow up with challenges I'll never understand. They'll need a way to deal with them like I did, and punk is still insidious and extreme and for those kids that need an outlet and community, I'm happy that punk is there to provide that for them. In Birmingham things only seem to be getting more interesting, and bands that formed after the scope of this collection (Slave, Fad, Heavy User) are pushing more boundaries than I was even aware of growing up. Many other bands continue to release new music and ruin more and more lives. My hope is that the younger people that stumble upon this collection may find a way to fit this into their own narrative and realize that this should never be a place for someone to tell them that punk is over or it's not the same. Of course the story won't be the same, because the story will be someone else's. A lot of punks get excited over the past. I do too, but I'm a lot more excited for the future. Alan Lomax once said that he felt like he "was the grandfather of folk music, and the grandfather had to die." When we put too much emphasis on the past we stop ourselves from moving forward.

I can't stress enough how this is my experience and my perspective. I conducted several interviews in an attempt to broaden the scope. As expected, some people were impossible to track down, and most people I reached out to enthusiastically agreed to an interview and then unfortunately got distracted and never got back to me. I did receive one very passionate decline for an interview.

We learned a lot from each other growing up, but there was a lot we weren't able to learn. It's hard to reconcile your past with your current mindset sometimes. When you grow up in a small city with all the trappings of small-town mindsets, you start to understand that even a group of people that considered themselves progressive still looked at certain things as normal and acceptable and now have bad memories of our own shortcomings to reflect upon. It's hard to look back on the things we did and thought were revolutionary as children and have to acknowledge how stunted our thoughts were. When we grew up and started asking other questions, obviously we started to grow apart. When I think about my generation in particular I understand that we looked at ourselves as marginalized—and in a lot of ways we were—and I like to think that we thought harder about racism and sexism than most of our peers that were more concerned with high school football and getting lucky on a Friday night, but at the end of the day we have to acknowledge that we only came so far. Looking back over the bands here, it's embarrassing to admit that 90% of the participants on the mentioned recordings are white males. While it would be easy for me to sidestep this by talking about the way gender roles are presented to those of us in the South, and how invisible racial boundaries are in place but not acknowledged, it's important to mention that even as late as the 2010s the culture of punk in Alabama was largely marred by privilege. As we grew up and became more interested in feminism it's easy to see that all the straight boys that called ourselves "feminists" at 18 probably contributed as much to the problem as the people we hated. When you start to put that together with how systemic racism can affect our mindsets, perhaps our home lives and relationships outside of punk became harder to manage and excuse. I like to think that a lot of us have gotten better at asking questions we were too naïve to ask as teenagers, and I see a generation younger than me having conversations about gender and race that I could not have fathomed as a youth. As we grow and move on to different avenues, hopefully the answers we were looking for catch up to us and we can bring that mindset into a bigger world where we can affect change. For that, I see punk as something that's still viable and necessary, but maybe I'm just dreaming.



ALAN LOMAX AND ROCK'N'ROLL

In 1959, financed by Atlantic Records, folk music documentarian Alan Lomax began his second journey through the American South. He hoped to dispel the notion held by some experts that folk music was no longer practiced in the same way that it had over the course of its history. Many of these experts believed folk music lived on through their own work in archiving its past. Lomax himself was a major part of this process. He had recorded much of America's songbook in the 1930s, and his previous expeditions had brought rural and ethnic music to the American mainstream.

Lomax's 1959 excursion was to show that the land in the South had not yet been over-farmed. He worked the fields, the prisons, the churches, and the dance halls in rural neighborhoods. He recorded music about rural American life by those living it instead of those obsessed with "slice-of-life" styles that they had learned to co-opt in school, and his collections became some of the most celebrated and analyzed by music scholars as the most accurate recordings of authentic American folk music. When you listen to Lomax's material, it feels gritty and authentic; there's a tickle of sweat running down your face when you hear chain gangs at Parchman's Farm in Mississippi and the breath blows on your neck listening to the Sacred Harp from Fyfe, Alabama. Lomax had to dig for these songs, but it was clear that he was at the right place at the right time, capturing something that maybe we weren't really supposed to hear all these years later. After all, music is an element. It's something carried through the air, pushing waves back and forth until it can find its way into our ears.

When viewed within context, folk music is spurred by protest, and one of the largest collections of protest music in the United States was recorded after Lomax's southern journey and is housed at the main branch of the public library in Birmingham, Alabama. In the mid-1960s, the most powerful man in Birmingham was the police chief Bull Connor who used city and federal funds to record thousands of hours of services in Black churches around Birmingham. He was hard at work dispersing protesters from sit-ins and quelling pro-integration activity, and since the church was the biggest meeting place of Black citizens in a city that was burning to the ground around him, he believed they warranted being monitored. Black churches were seen as a threat and as a result ministers in Birmingham and other Southern cities were forced to preach about racism in a way that was buried under layers of allegory. Religious music at the time reflected their resolve, and the tapes recorded in churches in Birmingham are still sitting in boxes in the library basement with Bull Connor's name on them.

I often wonder about those tapes. I asked to listen to them once and was told that only one person had had ever been given access to them. It was a Texan (not Mr. Lomax, though they shared a home state) that was visiting in the early 2000s while studying for a doctorate. They were supervised during their visit and were only allowed to make notes, not copies. I also often wonder what Lomax would have discovered had he made another journey through the South. The population had shifted under new political strife but may have seemed the same as ever to an outsider surveying the scene. In truth, not a whole lot had changed. After the Civil Rights Act of 1964, impoverished rural communities remained impoverished and the white flight from the cities to suburbs created a new, legal segregation. Lomax stated in an interview with *New York Post* during rock'n'roll's rise in popular culture that he was "sticking up for rock'n'roll because even though some of it is destructive and crude, it is essentially a creative American impulse. It's made by young people for young people. It's a rebellion against the Puritan ethic which had decreed from the beginning of society that Americans are not allowed to have pleasure."

As rock'n'roll stepped to the side, popular music in Alabama flourished in the '60s and '70s. Out of the legendary FAME Studios emerged the Muscle Shoals Sound Studio, a famous studio that hosted the Rolling Stones, Aretha Franklin, and the Allman Brothers. Wildcountry, a bluegrass quartet from Fort Payne, spent years as a successful regional act before adopting the name Alabama in 1977 and signing a deal with RCA, later recording seven multi-platinum albums and kickstarting the pop-country genre. But while the folk music of the state's past influenced the radio dial, there was something much more menacing bubbling under the surface that may have seemed much more interesting to those documentarians looking under rocks to how people reacted to their surroundings.

The first recording that could be considered "punk rock" from Alabama was on a 1979 single from a Mobile outfit called the Ravers. The tracks on the record show a practiced Southern rock band running through their songs at a frantic pace with nods to the early Ramones catalog. The sound is strange and the harmonica solos stick out like a sore thumb, so there's no way to figure out exactly where the influence was coming from. It could have been a lone copy of *Rocket to Russia* that turned up in a local record store, or perhaps their geography—right between Florida and Louisiana—which would have allowed them the opportunity to see other Southern acts like Florida's Critical Mass or Louisiana's Normals passing through town. Unfortunately, the record seems to have been lost to time, and while it's listed in some discographies and a few want lists, there are only two documented copies in the world.

In Auburn, a relatively progressive college town near the Georgia border, a Stooges-inspired band of miscreants going by the moniker Last Exit played a show at Auburn University to a stunned and incredulous crowd, but left no studio recordings. Their story would be irrelevant if not for the guitarist, James Harris, who started the radio show "Best of New Wave Rock" on the college station WEGL in 1978. It was the first radio show specializing in punk and new wave in the state, and possibly one of the first dozen or so in the US. The show, under various names and with different DJs at the helm (including a six year stint under the direction of Ken Sanderson, who went on to start the prolific punk label Prank Records), continued on until the early 2000s. The story is that over the years, the station amassed a giant collection of, in their words, "almost every American and a lot of foreign punk LPs from 1983 to 1992," and the collection was sold to a local record store for next to nothing by a young college student in the early 2000s who wanted to trade the records for more recent music to play on the station.

As punk spread throughout the state, different regions developed their own sounds and scenes, so it seems like focusing in on things geographically seems the best way to tackle it.

BIRMINGHAM

In 1981, Birmingham was home to small group of bands that centered around Jim Bob and the Leisure Suits and their label Polyester Records. Jim Bob and the Leisure Suits played some of the bigger early punk / new wave gigs in the city (including opening spots for the Ramones and Bow Wow Wow), and while running the Polyester imprint they released three of their own records as well as singles for locals the Invaders and the Colas. The style of bands on Polyester was informed by the more mainstream sounds of contemporary new wave and power pop and decidedly lacking in aggression. Members of the Colas ran a popular spot in town called the Cavern that hosted early shows for touring bands, but also gave an outlet to a more sinister and misanthropic entity called the Ether Dogs.

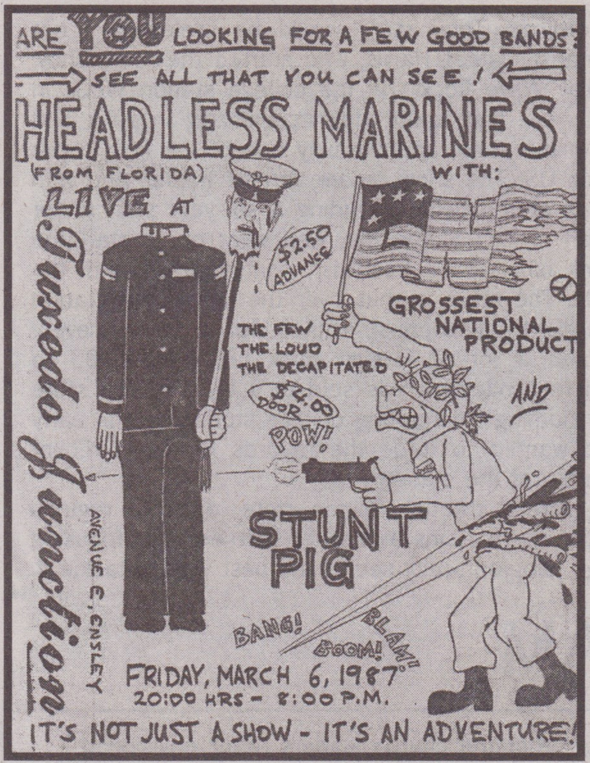
The Ether Dogs were more nihilistic than their Birmingham peers and are remembered in part for being a drunken, violent mess among the clean-cut scene around them. Stylistically they took more cues from late '60s Detroit than the new wave and power pop sounds of other bands in their scene, and their attitudes made sense considering their surroundings. There were 97 reported homicides in the small city of Birmingham in 1981, and the city was a shell of the population center it had been for the South in the middle '50s.

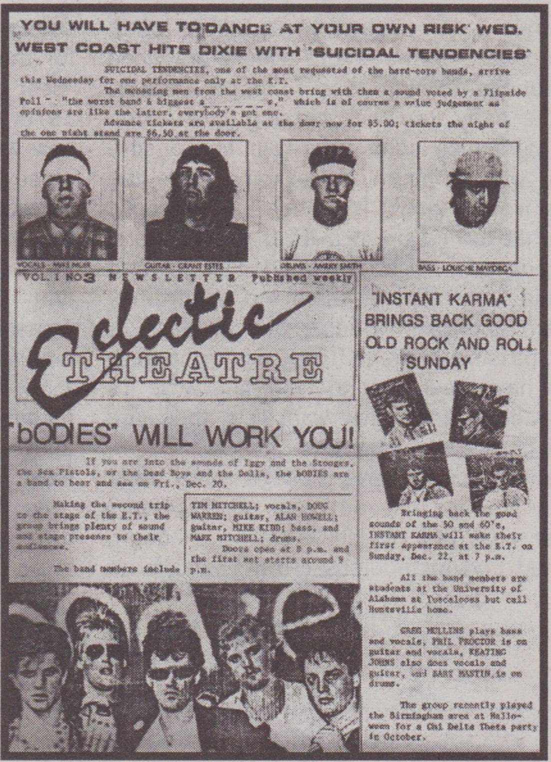
The Ether Dogs was started in 1980 by Clay Jones. His introduction to punk came in through discovering Motörhead and later the Damned, the Clash, and Killing Joke. Although they played the club with the UK Subs and the Circle Jerks, the band wasn't completely accepted by the Cavern scene. Guitarist Tim Boykin remembers that "the club-owner members of the Colas always seemed to harbor a certain disdain regarding our angry, primitive music, and there was a general air of antagonism between the two bands." As a result, the band found outlets elsewhere, and would travel to Atlanta for gigs with DDT, one of the early heavy bands in the South to incorporate elements of hardcore in their sound. They also booked their own loft parties and played an early gig at St. Andrew's church, described by Jones as "a wild night that the church leaders never envisioned."

Ether Dogs were a playful band despite their sinister sound. They loved to drink and would have "epic, drunken rehearsals that would occasionally erupt into sloppy violence." Surviving footage shows them as energetic youngsters who were having fun in the face of their surroundings. The most notable thing about the Ether Dogs is that while they were prone to drunken fights, they could still put together a song as cohesively as anyone. The band recorded an LP worth of material a year into their tenure, but the songs never saw official release, and Boykin left the band to join Karnival Season.

On the heels of the Ether Dogs was Grossest National Product, a band of freaks described as "drugged-out hippies pickled in punk" that started around 1982. Early incarnations of the band recorded a litany of songs across three demos, most of which seem to have evaporated. GNP became famous in mythologies, and any punk kid growing up in Alabama heard stories about wild parties with Black Flag and near-fatal tangles with neo-Nazis. One story recounts a group of Nazis storming into one of their shows and barely getting past the door before a deranged, long-haired punk put a broken baseball bat through one of their abdomens, though it's hard to separate the legends from the facts in a lot of cases as the stories change a lot depending on who's telling. GNP eventually released two split 7"s in the early '90s, with Jermflux and Nuclear Armed Hogs (featuring members of Operation Ivy / Schlong), and occasionally still play marathon sets with younger bands from the region. Todd Walk of the band Noxious remembered seeing them in 2001 as "the most transformative punk [he] had [seen] in high school."

"I saw these old dudes with Grateful Dead patches on leather vests...this hippie chick was passing out weed to people in the front row and it turned out to be the most potent dope I'd ever smoked. And then GNP...that singer was just absolutely fucking screaming into the mic. I was dead set against approaching him after the show. I just





YOU WILL HAVE TO 'DANCE AT YOUR OWN RISK' WED.

WEST COAST HITS DIXIE WITH 'SUICIDAL TENDENCIES'

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES, one of the most requested of the hard-core bands, arrive this Wednesday for one performance only at the E.T.

The menacing men from the west coast bring with them a sound voted by a Flipside Poll - "the worst band & biggest a_ _ _ _ _ _s," which is of course a value judgement as opinions are like the latter, everybody's got one.

Advance tickets are available at the door now for $5.00; tickets the night of the one night stand are $6.50 at the door.

VOCALS - MIKE MUIR
GUITAR - GRANT ESTES
DRUMS - AMERY SMITH
BASS - LOUICHE MAYORGA

VOL. 1 NO 3 NEWSLETTER Published weekly

Eclectic THEATRE

"bODIES" WILL WORK YOU!

If you are into the sounds of Iggy and the Stooges, the Sex Pistols, or the Dead Boys and the Dolls, the bODIES are a band to hear and see on Fri., Dec. 20.

Making the second trip to the stage of the E.T., the group brings plenty of sound and stage presence to their audience.

The band members include TIM MITCHELL; vocals, DOUG WARREN; guitar, ALAN HOWELL; guitar, MIKE KIDD; bass, and MARK MITCHELL; drums.

Doors open at 8 p.m. and the first set starts around 9 p.m.

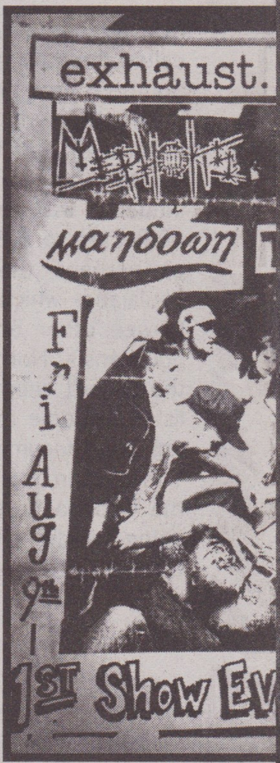
"INSTANT KARMA" BRINGS BACK GOOD OLD ROCK AND ROLL SUNDAY

Bringing back the good sounds of the 50 and 60's, INSTANT KARMA will make their first appearance at the E.T. on Sunday, Dec. 22, at 7 p.m.

All the band members are students at the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa but call Montevallo home.

GREG MULLINS plays bass and vocals, PHIL PROCTOR is on guitar and vocals, KEATING JOHNS also does vocals and guitar, and BART MASTIN is on drums.

The group recently played the Birmingham area at Halloween for a Chi Delta Theta party in October.



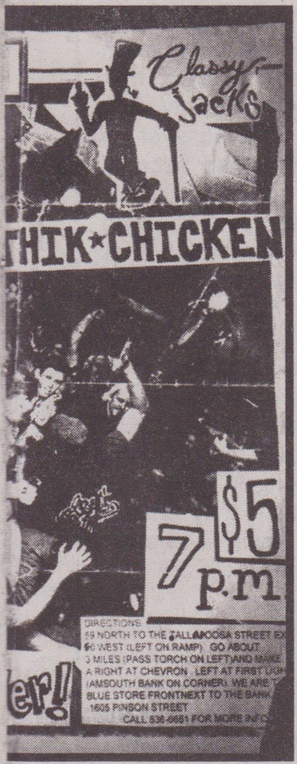
couldn't hang. Dude seemed straight up menacing after that performance. Keep in mind that dude was 5 feet tall and I was a 6'4" all-state soccer player."

Guitarist Chris Hendricks is still a mainstay of the Birmingham punk scene, and still active in several bands including Lockbody, an even more unhinged incarnation of GNP; the infamous singer, Spike, only recently moved out of state.

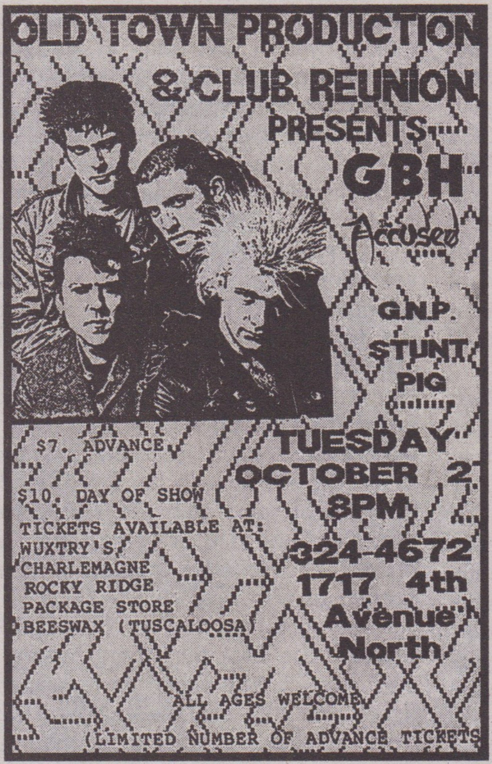
Birmingham continued to develop a strong local scene throughout the '80s, with bands like Stunt Pig Compound Fracture coming and going without recording much and other bands like Shaman Rain that came from the punk scene but had more of a college rock sound. Caustic Outlook formed in Birmingham in or around 1988 with a heavy influence from the late '80s NYHC scene, which is strongly evidenced in their demo cassette from 1990. They practiced in the basement of a baby furniture store called Storkland in downtown Birmingham with several bands, but they were a younger, insular group of kids adjusting to life in the city. Themes of drug use and race politics weren't just conjecture but things the band was actually living through. The band's drummer, Fred Panning, was biracial at a time in Birmingham when a lot of young people in the area were sympathetic to neo-fascist ideology and a generation of older whites still resented the stigma from the Civil Rights Movement. Their cassette is a lumbering beast that pulls itself in at just the right moments to strike. While the cassette (officially self-titled, but dubbed to a younger generation as *Tragic City Hardcore*) never saw official release in a durable format, it still became something of legend to scores of hardcore, punk, and skinhead kids that grew up in Birmingham after its release. Friends of Caustic Outlook started the more metallic band Warcry, whose sole output is a live recording from a show at the Caustic Outlook practice space in 1991. Other tapes from the same soundboard are said to exist, including sets from shows with Born Against and Rorschach, but no matter of digging has turned them up.

Caustic Outlook re-formed with a different line-up but after three shows changed their name to Thik Chicken to reflect their new direction. The band played together for three years and was a mainstay at Unity 1605 (run by George Cowgill of the band Exhaust), Barnstormers in Montevallo, and the Nick. They recorded a five song tape that garnered positive reviews in national zines, but their second outing, 1995s *Hole Friar's* 7" was panned because the joke song "Too Fucking Slow?" (a tongue-in-cheek song jocking the style the current bar-rock trend) was taken as a serious representation of the band. "Road Block" is from the *Hole Friar's* 7" and is far more indicative of how the band actually sounded, as is "NFL," their contribution to the *Dixie Punks* compilation from 1997. The band was considered a File 13 band, along with Lamenstra and the Dougs. Barron, who replaced original singer Brett in Dougs and Thik Chicken, described File 13 as "just a name for music from a certain group of bands from Birmingham. We used it to put out our own tapes and records and whatnot. Since we never really made any money to speak of you wouldn't call it a business."

Birmingham in the '90s produced a litany of bands, including the metallic hardcore band Nail, who released a tape and a 7"; the Oi! band Classy Jacks, who released a few songs on the compilation *Punks, Skins, and Herberts Vol. 3* on France's Helen of Oi! Records; and A Common Thread, the positive hardcore band most remembered for their *Blind Solution* 7" from 1999, though they also released a demo tape in 1998 and appeared on the Beer City Record's compilation *Underground Invasion #3* with a myriad bands that are better forgotten. They shared members with Caption, 30 Pieces of Silver and None But Burning, and



Classy Jacks
THIK★CHICKEN
$5
7 p.m.
DIRECTIONS:
59 NORTH TO THE TALLAPOOSA STREET EX
59 WEST (LEFT ON RAMP) GO ABOUT
3 MILES (PASS TORCH ON LEFT) AND MAKE
A RIGHT AT CHEVRON. LEFT AT FIRST LIG
(AMSOUTH BANK ON CORNER) WE ARE T
BLUE STORE FRONT NEXT TO THE BANK
1605 PINSON STREET
CALL 536-0651 FOR MORE INFO
er!



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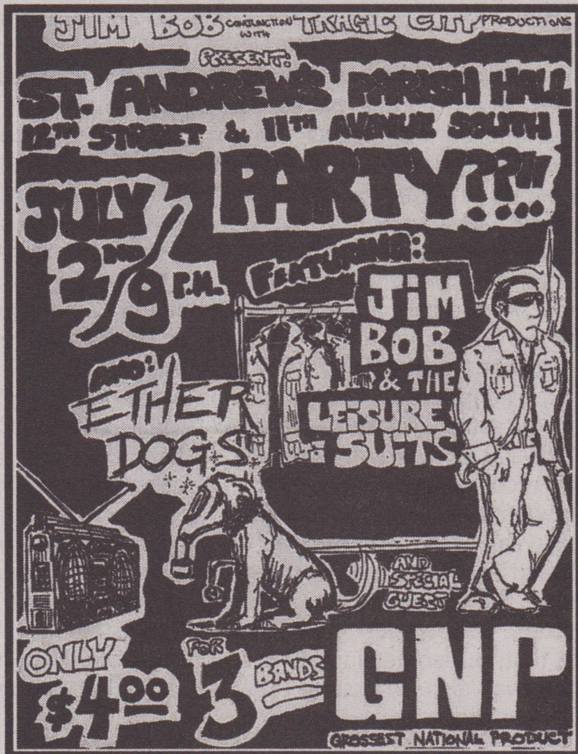

JIM BOB in conjunction with TRAGIC CITY PRODUCTIONS
PRESENTS:
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12TH STREET & 11TH AVENUE SOUTH
PARTY?!?!...
JULY 2ND 9 P.M.
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JIM BOB & THE LEISURE SUITS
AND: ETHER DOGS
AND SPECIAL GUEST
ONLY $4.00 FOR 3 BANDS
GNP
GROSSEST NATIONAL PRODUCT

members later went on to form Alan Ogg. Other bands were also on the scene at the time including Exhaust, who toured the US and played with Los Crudos in California, and Mandown, technically a Decatur / Huntsville band but more relevant to the Birmingham scene.

As the '90s gave way to the 2000s, Andrew Reid, member of several File13 bands including Lamenstra and Alamantra, opened a club on the city's west side called the Boiler Room. The room had a massive capacity of 700 people and was thus struck with the awful luck of looking perpetually empty. Larger bands toured through the Boiler Room like Hot Water Music, Glassjaw, and Ann Beretta; as well as reformed line-ups of the punk bands of yore like the Misfits, UK Subs, and the Dead Kennedys. The club was situated in a neighborhood that was prone to gang violence and a nearby church hosted services through the night, calling on locals to save their community. Today most of the real estate on the block currently sits abandoned, though the actual site of the Boiler Room has been a strip club for several years.

A staple at the Boiler Room was a band called Truth Serum—made up of members of the Caustic Outlook and Thik Chicken crew—that quickly changed their name to Skeptic, and eventually added a question mark in an attempt to differentiate themselves from the dozen or so other bands riding under the same moniker. With a "Played with…" list that spans the entire gamut of underground music, Skeptic? have released two 7"s, several albums, and have twice been interviewed on NPR in their running sixteen year career as a band. Despite their output and longevity, the band has never played North of Tennessee or West of Louisiana, but they did play a notorious show at Bryce Mental Hospital on Halloween, only attended by the patients and staff. Members of the band have rotated over the years, with singer Barron as the only constant member. Original bassist John Darnell died in 2007.

The Boiler Room closed after a short, tumultuous time, and several months later in 2003 Cave9 was opened by Aaron Hamilton as a space that was meant to be "easily accessible and inclusive." The club was housed in a small warehouse space that was part of an art supply store, and existed there for several years until they were kicked out by the landlord. The initial space served as a venue for any band that could fall under the vague umbrella of punk at night, but at other times was utilized for art and music classes for young people in Birmingham. Cave9 became a staple in the city and ushered in a younger, more diverse group of bands that became invested in the politics of punk.

The introduction of Cave9 is where things get tricky for me. My involvement with punk in Alabama started in 2001. At fourteen I was in a band called Seven Come Eleven that played a handful of shows at the Boiler Room and, from a crazy turn of luck, was able to play three shows in Japan due to a cultural grant given to us as a favor to our drummer's parents, who taught pottery in Montevallo and for years had allowed Japanese exchange students to stay in their home while studying in Alabama. We played basic "1-2 fuck you" punk rock and ran through the obligatory Reagan Youth and Agent Orange covers. Our time together was short, but I caught the band fever in a big way and started the unfortunately named Korova soon after we split. We were a teenage band from Birmingham that played almost weekly at Cave9 and occasionally made trips to Huntsville or more rural locations. We were once asked to play with the Templars and Terminus City in Atlanta when I was fifteen but our drummer's parents wouldn't let us go. We recorded several demos while we were teenagers and went over most of the bumps teen bands do because they take things too seriously.

When I was fifteen I started writing letters to bands I read about in *Maximum Rocknroll* and tried to get them to come through Birmingham, and through "Victimized Productions" I was able to book bands like Bones Brigade, I Object, Adolf and the Piss Artists, Demented Are Go and countless others. Mike Parsons, a Tuscaloosa native that would drive to shows in Birmingham, started booking shows under the moniker "Best of Times" and between the two of us and a handful of others we were able to host punk and hardcore shows in Birmingham several times a week for several years. As a result, a few younger bands in Birmingham were able to make connections with touring bands and get some music out to other areas of the country.

Korova recorded several demos when we were in high school, some of which were later compiled into a 7" titled *If There is a Future* in 2007. In 2008 we got back together and recorded a full-length CD. Our drummer quit the day we were supposed to record and I showed up drunk. The next year or so was a series of gigs where either no one showed up or we ended up getting thrown out of the venue before the set was over (or in some cases, before it even started). I know most punk bands have to deal with issues like that, but something about it feels special when it's you. There was also a cassette tape and a 7" that was released after we broke up.

There was another band in Birmingham that veered towards a stripped down style of hardcore during those days. Steel City Crime played their first show in 2005 at a battle of the bands. Their first demo took influence mainly from the first wave of West Coast hardcore like Black Flag and the Circle Jerks, while their later recording developed a more crusty sound. The band was short-lived but well-known in the state for the antics of their front man John Picard, who routinely cut himself on stage. They got in the habit of wearing dresses and face paint, and would also crucify sex dolls on stage. In Alabama at the time, this was still somewhat of a dangerous idea. I remember having to run out of shows and pile in the car to race back to the city after the police were called when the band would play shows outside the comforts of Birmingham proper. I remember one show at a skate park in Tarrant where John cut himself and, when confronted by the owner, convinced her it was fake blood. He then said "Fuck the police" and the owner called the cops. As we dashed out, I was throwing out flyers for the next Korova show, where we opened for Millions of Dead Cops.

The most talented and coherent band to emerge from the early 2000s scene was the Ackleys. Started by the twin sisters Katie and Allison Crutchfield when they were in high school, the band played smart and sugary indie rock that in its early stages reminded me of Beat Happening and Discount. As hardcore ruled the day in Birmingham, the Ackleys ended up playing shows with far more hardcore, punk rock, and Oi! bands than they did with bands that fit their brand of music, but they tended to win over the crowd. In hindsight, we treated them as a novelty when they were certainly warranted more serious attention. Drummer Carter Wilson went on to start Legion and join Coliseum, and later start the D-beat band Heavy User; the Crutchfield sisters experienced success in P.S. Eliot, Waxahatchee, and Swearin'.

I was gone for a couple of years and missed a lot. Bands like Ex-Members of the Holy Trinity started up, making the kind of music that I wished other bands had been making while I was living in Alabama. I wound up back in Birmingham when I was 21 and stumbled onto a scene that was a lot more volatile than it had been previously. The straightedge kids had all become drunks and those of us who were already predisposed to depression had become unforgivingly nihilistic as we met the real world. The music started to mean something different and politics, both wide and interpersonal, seemed much more important. That scene produced Legion, arguably Alabama hardcore's most popular export. The band released a solo 7" and two split 7"s (with Mammoth Grinder and Fingers Crossed), which were later compiled onto a retrospective cassette. Their sound took influence from heavy Midwestern hardcore and fused it with elements of late '80s Japanese HC. If there were ever a band from the city that should have "made it" (in the sense of a hardcore band "making it"), they are it. National tours with Die Young (with whom they shared two members, Jeff Williams, and Kayhan Vaziri) somehow proved unsuccessful, though in the South they are still spoken of with reverence.

I was once told that the best band in the world is always whoever the best punk band was in your hometown when you were 21, and based on my experiences I am inclined to agree with that sentiment. Now I Have a Machine Gun are immortalized in my mind as that band. Their shows were the most intense, their songs were surprising and exciting, and everything they recorded is still fresh and relevant. The band formed from several members of younger Birmingham bands including Steel City Crime and No Price Paid, though Trent Thomas, the older member that that had done time in The Cleansing Power of Fire, held it all together.

The high school bands that came before Now I Have a Machine Gun were certainly good, but as they stumbled into young adulthood the world took them by surprise and I'm not sure if they wanted to fight back or give in. That dichotomy is evidenced in their music, with flashes of blast beats set off by organic breakdowns that were in no way danceable, but also refrained from cheap tricks and dissonant chords of the screamo movement. Now I Have a Machine Gun was too smart to fall into musical traps. Their last show, in a small room on Birmingham's South east side called Magic City Wholesale, is still my favorite show memory. Members went on to form the Exposures and the Black Hole Kids. Front man Ricky Norris died in 2008, and their sole recording is collected among a series of other recordings from his various projects on a tape released on Victimized Records called *I Don't Want to Be Ashamed Anymore*.

STAY TUNED FOR PART II IN ISSUE #415 (CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?) OF *MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL*: HUNTSVILLE, TUSCALOOSA, MONTGOMERY, MOBILE, PENSACOLA, AND MORE. GOT PICS FROM THOSE STORIED SCENES OF YESTERYEAR? MRR AT MAXIMUMROCKNROLL DOT COM, PLEASE AND THANK YOU.

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

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FREAK OUT IN A MOONAGE DAYDREAM

Anyone who regularly reads this column knows I like to stand up for the underdog. The person who undeservedly didn't get the proper credit for the work they put in, who has pushed to the sidelines and most people probably don't even realize was involved. Mick Ronson is such a person. The documentary **Beside Bowie: The Mick Ronson Story** attempts to undo this injustice by getting Ronson situated in the music history books. It also manages to convolute my understanding of his place in David Bowie's career. Was he as important as I always thought?

Since Ronson's reputation is mostly based on his association with David Bowie, **Beside Bowie: The Mick Ronson Story** begins with a lengthy introduction of Bowie's musical beginnings. Bowie had released two albums and a hit with "Space Oddity" by the time Ronson started working with him. Former bandmate John Cambridge recruited Ronson for Bowie's backing band. Ronson and Bowie hit it off immediately with Ronson joining Bowie for a live performance on John Peel's BBC show two days after their meeting. That immediacy signifies Ronson's talent as well as his understanding of Bowie's musical style and aspirations. Ronson then joins the band that would become The Spiders From Mars.

It is unclear from **Beside Bowie: The Mick Ronson Story** why Ronson stopped playing with Bowie. When Bowie famously breaks up The Spiders From Mars on stage in London 1973, it is inaccurately presented as Ronson's last involvement with Bowie. I get the impression from the film that Ronson's decision to listen to manager Tony Defries and record a solo album while Bowie was taking a break set Ronson off on his path away from Bowie. It is implied that this was a bad decision since he was not comfortable fronting a band and his solo album flopped

Ronson occasionally appears with Bowie, but his career goes off toward being a studio musician and producer. He works with David Cassidy, Lulu, John Cougar Mellencamp and Morrissey to name a few. Glen Matlock tells a cute story about answering the phone when Ronson called the record label. Matlock decided to take advantage of the situation and ask Ronson to produce the Rich Kids album. He agreed to do it while on the phone. The overall inference is that because Ronson didn't become as successful as he probably should have been he was somehow not happy. I disagree. You can't take it with you, but your influence and reputation can last.

Beside Bowie: The Mick Ronson Story is made for TV quality. It has a tendency to go off on too many tangents. The interviews with Ronson are the most interesting aspect. He is an eloquent, thoughtful speaker. His thoughts on Bowie never revisiting Ziggy Stardust are among the best anti-reunion arguments ever. But at times it seems as if more of the story could be had by searching for Ronson interviews online.

Beside Bowie: The Mick Ronson Story is partially narrated by Bowie, who is not interviewed for the film. Neither is Morrissey. Otherwise almost every person involved in the story seems to be interviewed. They paint a compelling argument for Ronson. Yet it still feels like something has been left out. (cardinalreleasing.com)

The title **Scenesters: Music, Mayhem & Melrose Ave 1985-1990** is enough to make this Northern Californian want to avoid this documentary. The documentary states this is when punk, glam, hard rock, alternative, garage and metal all met in Los Angeles. Although music scenes seem discrete these days, back then if you were into music outside of the top 40 you were considered a freak. Most small city scenes incorporated many genres, as did the big cities. In L.A.'s case it seems that everyone was burnt out on the predictability and violence of the first two waves so the new scene progressed and regressed from there.

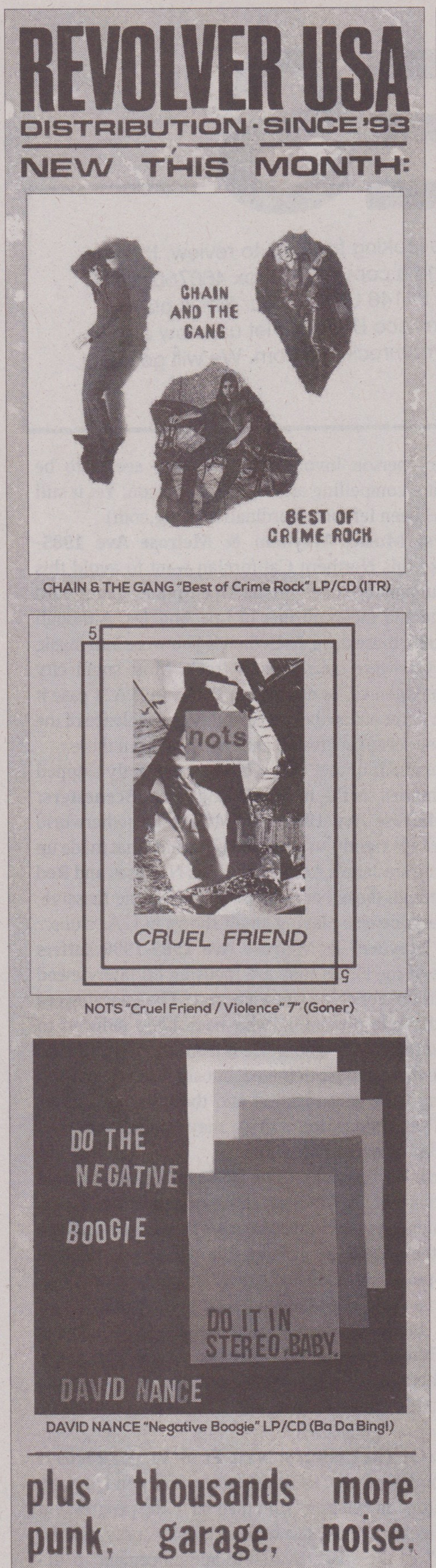
Focusing on the second half of the '80s, which is constantly skipped over in music documentaries, is the inspired thing about **Scenesters: Music, Mayhem & Melrose Ave 1985-1990**. It is that netherworld before Nirvana hits. Perhaps rightly so since the big bands that made up the L.A. scene at this time are Jane's Addiction, Guns N' Roses and Red Hot Chili Peppers. Although those bands went on to become massive, they started out like everyone else playing small shows in L.A. clubs.

Scenesters: Music, Mayhem & Melrose Ave 1985-1990 suffers from have no members of the bands they are focusing on interviewed for the film, but that ends up working to its advantage. The interviewees are the scenesters as the title proclaims who have been reduced to looking on in awe at the few bands who made it from the scene. These are the people who were there and participated, but are now reassessing their lives while dealing with gentrification and the other calamities of modern city life. Their interesting stories may spark your own memories of the late '80s. (scenestersdoc.com)

Turn Of The Century: NYC Punk In The 2000s bills itself as a time capsule. It is more the diary of Tony Arena who shot and edited it. It is a collection of bands interspersed with NYC street life. It incorporates the aftermath of 9/11, the dedication of Joey Ramone place, the 30th anniversary of Nancy Spungen's death and everyday gentrification that takes over the city. Places close and others open up in their place.

Some of the bands included are Tie Reds, Hank Wood & the Hammerheads, Live Fast Die, and DC Snipers. Some bands are recorded worse than others. Some clubs are darker than others, people yell and talk, but it all adds to the diary aspect. Life in the city can be noisy and unpleasant.

The best part of **Turn Of The Century: NYC Punk In The 2000s** is the montage of the life and death of CBGB. It starts with a band playing at CBGB, moves to a "stop the eviction" flier then on to the progression of the awning from the iconic printed one to one sloppily spray painted with "CBGB's forever" to the space available announcement to the current high end store. Arena follows along to the opening of a CBGB store at another location which is then replaced by a for rent sign. A bit of genius. (tmsrocks.com)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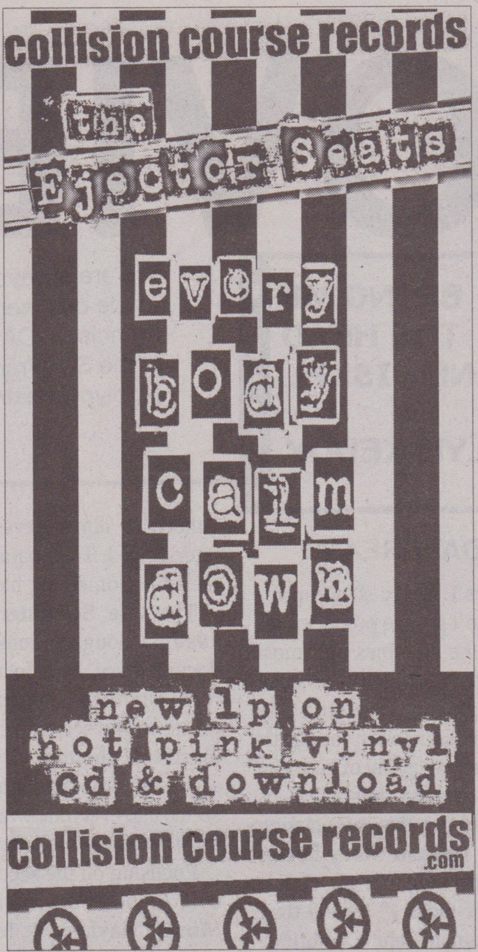
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(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(MM) Marissa Magic
(PA) Pete Avery
(P$) Paul Argent
(RH) Ryan Hertel
(RK) Ramsey Kanaan
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(WN) Robert Collins

ADULT MAGIC – “Collide” EP

ADULT MAGIC is an alternative rock / pop punk band from Long Island with members from IRON CHIC, BROADCASTER, CROW BAIT, and SISTER KISSER. Two songs on each side that are pretty mellow and poppy. Nothing too exciting but these guys are good players and songwriters. (DB)

(Dead Broke / Drunken Sailor)

ANDY HUMAN AND THE REPTOIDS – “Refrigerator / You Don’t Even Know”

This sounds like a basement glam band initially inspired by SLADE hearing the ADVERTS for the first time and changing course immediately. “Refrigerator,” a snarled ode to an appliance found in a convenience store, is a throwaway slice of furtive pop brilliance. The B-side is a narrative journey into the hell that is being stuck in conversation with The All-Knowing Expert, a place we have all been trapped and somehow survived. This is my fave ANDY HUMAN release since the LP, which is genius. (LG)

(Total Punk)

ANTISEEN – “The Southern Hostility Demos” LP

Yes, I audibly groaned when I saw this LP in my review pile this month, even while realizing that we all need to do our part in this post-Bruce Roehrs *MRR* world. Like every other band these days ANTISEEN are on the nostalgia trip. TKO has re-released a slew of their LPs (see last issue). This collection of demos for their 1991 album was released in 2016. The tapes have been “lost” all this time. I guess these versions are rougher, but it’s not like ANTISEEN were well-produced in the first place. It would probably take a fan to tell the difference. However, not all songs from the album are here and there are some that were on it as well. ANTISEEN are MOTÖRHEAD meets the MISFITS, AKA tough guys playing stripped down rock’n’roll. The song selection does display some eclecticism with covers of JOHNNY FULLER, TALKING HEADS, and BROKEN TALENT. It comes with a poster. (CK)

(TKO)

ANTI-SEX – “Un Mejor Futuro” LP

Sincere and authentic are two of the first words that come to mind when listening to Mexico City’s ANTI-SEX. In a time when a lot of bands fall within a very calculated, recycled, and pretentious framework of what they’re trying to present, *Un Mejor Futuro* provides a refreshing dose of realness and authenticity. The first time I saw ANTI-SEX in the outskirts of Mexico City at 2:00 a.m., I was immediately captured by their energy and rawness. *Un Mejor Futuro* is no exception. This record kicks in with “No Sé”—no frills, no long intros and no fucking around. This track, like some of the others, crashes between driving, mid-tempo rhythms and a fist-pumping, blistering pace. ANTI-SEX play in a manner that is raw, distorted, and pissed while seamlessly incorporating memorable vocal melodies. In songs like “Rechazados por el Estado”, the speed and vocal melodies, reminiscent of ÚLTIMO RESORTE, will be stuck in your head for weeks and have you pogo-ing in your room. At other moments, the unhinged ferocity and speed remind me of classic ’80s Italian hardcore such as WRETCHED. Those moments are complimented well by the more mid-tempo and catchy tracks such as “Hombre Perturbado,” which have rhythms to get you dancing and powerful choruses to get you singing along. Speaking of choruses, I would suggest spending some time with these lyrics. Images of grim realities and inner turmoil are painted with lyrics that are frustrated, angry, urgent, and honest. Every element of *Un Mejor Futuro* (the songs, the lyrics, the art, the recording) is done a way that makes a record memorable and able to stand the test of time. This is a record not to miss! Also if you have a chance, make sure to catch ANTI-SEX live! I promise you’ll be happy you did. (BP)

(Cintas Pepe / Thrilling Living / World Gone Mad)

ANTI-SOCIAL / THE HAS BEENS – split EP

Two bands I know jack about play some polished ’80s hardcore punk. They look like they’re old enough to know what’s up from the band photos. ANTI-SOCIAL do their best impression of BAD RELIGION from the period when that band was briefly listenable. “Fuck The Government” is the best track and a relative statement. The HAS BEENS do a little ANGRY SAMOANS and DI action with some metal interludes and (ugh) ska moments. I’ll take the former over the latter but this really doesn’t do much for me. (RO)

(Jerkoff)

AUTARCH / LANDBRIDGE – split LP

North Carolina’s AUTARCH should be well known to fans of blackened melodic crust. There’s a bit more blasting this time around,

and a massive recording that successfully captures their power. Two harsh vocalists are battling here, just as two guitars challenge the distinction between harmony and brutality. The flip is my introduction to Florida's LANDBRIDGE, and I am sold. More epic crust in the classic early '00s tradition (and fuck does it feel weird to say "classic" and "early '00s" but you know what I mean), delivered with a constantly galloping fury and devastatingly powerful female / male vocals. I seem to be involved in frequent discussions about "what happened" to this subgenre of HC / punk. Clearly it never went anywhere—it just got better after you stopped paying attention. A crushing and excellent split record. (WN)
(Alerta Antifascista / IFB / Replenish)

AUTONOMICS – "Debt Sounds" CD

Hard pressed to call this punk. Autonomics are straight alt-rock à la the GLANDS and other similar bands in the late '90s through the early '00s. Since I don't know much nor care about either I'll leave it at that. (CR)
(Rola)

BAD MOVES – "Shitty Tomorrow" EP

This is the kind of thing that seems like it might have been created with me in mind. It's catchy as all hell. It's power pop. It's (sometimes) female-fronted. It's got vocals and guitars and bass and drums. And it's got a nice, warm, full, energetic sound. It's sometimes even a little jangly. Seriously, the sound has a nice texture to it. I think if i was forced to give it a label, it would be "Melodic Pretty Power Pop." I like that many of the songs start in a fairly simple place and end up with a different, higher energy. (KK)
(Nervous Nelly)

BANSHEE – "Caw!" LP

Some heads from Boston bands you probably know get together to smoke some reefer and *rock*. They refer to it as a "psychedelic" record but it's really only lysergic by way of wah wah pedal and length of some songs. That's not meant as a put down as it's a pretty rocking record especially on songs like "Culture Vulture" which channel the best insanities of ANNIHILATION TIME. Most of the time I want the vocals to be a little more unhinged—and I get my wish on "Devil's Eyes" which is pure STOOGES. Side two finds the band loosening up (or the drugs kicking in) as the songs get longer and the madness grows. This reminds me of when hardcore bands started growing their hair, dropping tons of acid and making great rocking music that would later turn into the whole shitty grunge thing. TALES OF TERROR, DRUNK INJUNS, and GREEN RIVER. Great company for these guys and I'm looking forward to more. (RO)
(self-released)

BERNAYS PROPAGANDA – "Na To Igrisce Ne Smem" LP

Fifth album from this highly acclaimed Macedonian post-punk group, going on at least ten years now. I missed the last album, but they've turned more toward electronic and new wave tendencies since the stuff I'm most familiar with, and it's a good look for them. It's still hella danceable, maybe a little bit darker and smoother, and more detail-oriented on the production end. Less guitar / rock focused. Some tracks have theater play and film credits, and there are several other collaborators credited, all contributing to make this a "special" offering for those already initiated with the band. The remix of "My Personal Holiday" treads dance-club territory (which I don't find relatable here) but the rest of the tracks each hold up on their own. Need more modern DIY Balkan electro-punk in your life? This LP should satisfy. (MA)
(Ill In the Head)

BESTHÖVEN / B.E.T.O.E. – split EP

What a tremendous coincidence that just as *Negative Insight #3* has emerged from the depths to re-ignite the punk public's fascination with SHITLICKERS we get this split featuring two of South America's finest purveyors of raw punk offering up their takes on the SHITLICKERS canon. B.E.T.O.E. tackle the entirety of the *GBG '82* EP on one side, while BESTHÖVEN offer up the other four recorded tracks on the flip. Fofão / BESTHÖVEN tackle the material in very faithful fashion, keeping the tempos mid-paced and the sound raw as fuck. It's good, but hardly essential if you have access to the original recordings via any one of the many bootlegs and reissues that have been released in the last thirty-plus years. B.E.T.O.E. offer up a more dynamic take, harnessing mountains of noize and tons of energy as they pound out the four tracks that more or less set the template for the D-beat revolution that continues to this day. It's hard to get really enthusiastic about straight-up cover records, but this is one of the best to come down the pike in a long time, mostly due to the B.E.T.O.E. contributions but helped along by BESTHÖVEN and quality graphic design that pays tribute to the art that appeared in both the *GBG '82* and *Cracked Cop Skulls* variants of the SHITLICKERS EP. (AU)
(Grind Your Mind / Ryvvolte / Sin Fronteras / Vision of Warning)

BLAHA – "Fresh Horse" EP

Three solo tracks from Mike Blaha from the BLIND SHAKE. It's a game of two halves—Side A boasts a pair of pulverizing psyche punk burners, while the flip takes a more melodic turn with a reverb-laden power pop tune with vaguely creepy lyrics. That said, the B-side is by far my favorite. (AM)
(Slovenly)

BOTTOM FEEDERS – LP

This is fuzzed-out garage rock moderne from New Orleans. It has that laid back, nonchalant style that now is associated with the new garage scene. It sounds fine, but it is becoming a little bit ordinary. (CK)
(Good Land)

BROMURE – "A La Roquette" EP

BROMURE hails from France and plays catchy as hell Oi! The first track "Catacombes" is melodic, driving, and overlaid with saxophone leads (in the best damn way possible). The Oi! influence is clear in the guitar work, gang vocals, and gruff singing but the emphasis on melody definitely adds an interesting layer to this record. The saxophone leads

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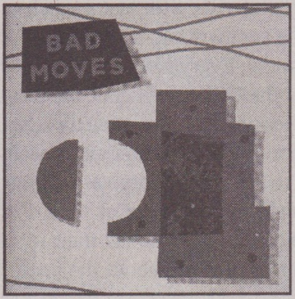

B.E.T.O.E TRIBUTE TO SHIT LICKER'S Ep!!
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BLAHA FRESH HORSE

set BROMURE apart from other Oi! contemporaries and are also pulled off in a way that is memorable and not cheesy. Well, perhaps *some* parts could come off as a little cheesy. The somber melody of these tracks reminds me of French contemporaries SYNDROME 81 and in general, French Oi! classics CAMERA SILENS. Check this record out! (BP)
(Une Vie Pour Rien?)

CARSICKNESS – "1979–1982" CD
This collection starts off appropriately enough (for 2017) with CARSICKNESS's 1980 ode to KKK Imperial Grand Wizard Bill Wilkinson: "*What do you say to the KKK? Fuck you.*" Add to that the lilting, FERGAL SHARKEY-ish vocals of JOE SOAP and everyone needs to have the song on hand for the next White Nationalist counter-protest. This is a greatest hits compilation of the Pittsburgh band's three 7"s and two LPs. All the songs are pretty great. It is one of those rare instances when a band forgotten to time deserves another look. You'll be happy you did. Liner notes written by Michael Chabon who amusingly seems to forget that in the '80s most American punk bands didn't "dress punk." (CK)
(Get Hip)

CHEATER SLICKS – "Destination Lonely" LP
Deaf? Dumb? Somehow still impervious to the godlike power of CHEATER SLICKS? Well, sophomore outing *Destination Lonely* is now out'n'about domestically for the first time ever. Kind of a shocker: bassless wunder-rock, their first long-form utterance of the sound and spirit that has made them unbeatable in the hearts of legions of pissed, bleary rock devotees. They would grow more noisy and desperate with the passage of time, but that to-the-bone dedication is ever-present in every tune included on *Destination Lonely*. Newbies should start here, then quickly work their way forward to every other CHEATER SLICKS album, cuz they're all better than whatever the fuck else you love. (MC)
(Almost Ready)

THE CHINCHEES – "Their First Album" LP
It makes sense that this album came out on Dirt Cult. Lo-fi and garage-y power pop from Minneapolis. Eleven addictive tracks on yellow vinyl for fans of the MARKED MEN, SONIC AVENUES, and the like. This shit is really catchy and well-done—I love it! (DB)
(Dirt Cult)

CHRISTMAS PETS – "Glow / Hipbone"
If Plan-It-X still existed and turned down the posi-frolic knob and upped the downers and the indie sass knob this would be that. I would imagine this would have greater appeal to the college radio crowd than the *MRR* crowd. (P$)
(self-released)

COCKTAILS – "Hypochondriac" LP
Wow. This is awesome. Infectiously catchy power pop with perfect harmonies. If that sounds like something you might like, then you need to get in search of this. I'm not sure if it's the songs or the recording, but this really reminds me of power pop circa 1979. Some of the songs are male-fronted, but the female vocals also play a part. All of the songs seem to have a soft prettiness to them and the organ has more than a fill-in role. Depending on how you look at them, most of the songs can be seen as either upbeat or sort of reflective. (KK)
(Alien Snatch!)

COMBATANT – "Slipknot" EP
Sick East Coast hardcore from Maine. While this reminds me a lot of Boston and Virginia contemporary hardcore like CHAIN RANK, Beach Impediment stuff, and of course '80s hardcore greats, it's cool to hear of a band coming out of Maine because I honestly can't even name one other. I think I hear a slight Japanese hardcore influence in there, but maybe I'm just high. Seven-song EP that started off pretty standard with "*All this fucking pressure*" as the first line and a wailing single note lead. It was the other six songs on the EP that caught my ear. This is well-executed, in-the-pocket hardcore. Did I mention hardcore yet? Pick this one up! (JC)
(Not Like You)

DAGGER – "It Makes Me Sick" EP
Ferocious hardcore punk from Indiana! The first song is like a lost MINOR THREAT demo, and the second track doesn't stray too far from there. The flip side forays into NEOS speed, complete with machine-gun snare rolls. The songs and the delivery are certainly compelling on their own, but half of the appeal is the ultra-raw production, namely the satisfying snare splat. This magical production reminds me of the second OTAN ep, and only enhances the pure frustration and exasperation dripping from this disc. More! (MA)
(Lengua Armada)

DAN PADILLA / PRINCE – split EP
DAN PADILLA was best known for being mostly members of TILTWHEEL who switched their instrumental duties around, so you kinda sorta know what you're getting into: sweet bros who love RADON, cheap beer, and are prone to whipping their shirts off if the weather gets above 75 degrees. This is allegedly their final recording, and it's a little more polished than earlier efforts. Slow and reflective, like Davey's been listening to *24 Hour Revenge Therapy* for a month straight, but not afraid to get wild at the drop of a hat if necessary. Smooth old dude vocals over sweet San Diego party jams. The PRINCE side is undoubtedly my favorite shit I've heard from them to date. Super clean hooks with slightly spastically spat vocals in an early RADON meets MARKED MEN kinda way. I really love this, and am more than a little bummed that it's so late in getting here. Maybe they walked it over. Artwork by Ming Donkey! (DZ)
(Dead Broke)

DEAD 77 – Die Young EP
Fast and melodic streetpunk from Southern California in the same vein as A GLOBAL THREAT, the VIRUS, and CLIT 45. While some

bands that try to sound like this end up being kinda boring, DEAD 77 keeps it short and energetic. Fun songs to spike your hawk and lace up your boots to! Up the punx! (DB)
(Evacuate)

DERBE LEBOWSKI – LP

A one-sided LP of heavy-duty powerviolence out of Germany. These guys lean to the IRON LUNG side of the powerviolence spectrum with well-crafted songs and prominent feedback noise. They also throw in a few moments of D-beat in for good measure. The German powerviolence game is deep right now, and this band reps it well! (BA)
(Dead Heroes / Spastic Fantastic)

DESPERATE FIX – "Death Kick Life's Ass" EP

Within the first five seconds of the ring-out at the start of this record, given the tone and sound, I knew that this was hardcore from Sweden. DESPERATE FIX delivers six hardcore blasts in the vein of MISS BRUKARNA and TOTALITÄR. While many current bands that are using '80s Swedish hardcore as a reference point seem to lean in the direction of D-beat brutality that's not the case with this record. The songs are frantic, stripped down, and to the point with an emphasis on rawness and speed rather than a pulverizing wall of sound. Songs like "Not Today" show an influence from '80s USHC à la JERRY'S KIDS as well. This record is a ripper! Definitely worth checking out if you appreciate no-frills, raw, hardcore punk. (BP)
(Mangel Wax)

DON'T ASK – LP

Well, shit. DON'T ASK is a slightly new Oakland trio that has a bunch of buzz, and with good reason...they're pretty fucking killer. Jangly, incredibly simple, pop-obsessed punk. It seems like there are two different songwriters and singers here. One is snotty, snarly, and somehow still surprisingly sweet. The other is passionate, powerful, poised, and just a little pissed. This, although too late to be a perfect summer record, is on blaring full repeat, just in case there's any summer left on the street. If you're into tender yet wild jams, do yourself a fucking favor and pick this up. (DZ)
(Deimos)

DS-13 – "Umeå Hardcore Forever, Forever Umeå Hardcore" 2xLP

Along with a few other key players, DS-13 were one of the bands instrumental in popularizing fast, early '80s influenced hardcore around the turn of the millennium, saving many a hardcore scene from more of the same boring ball-capped baggy-clothing bullshit. Fifteen years after the original last chance to mosh (but is any band breakup permanent these days?), this double LP compiles all of their non-LP tracks, with a flyer collage, retrospective, etc. The jacket aesthetic is a bit too wedding program for me, but everything is presented with care and attention to detail, and despite my strong preference for the first 7" over anything that came after, it's good to have their more common records all in one place alongside the harder-to-find splits and array of compilation tracks. Musically, they were at their best when they were blasting out anthemic early '80s-style USHC meets crusty hardcore riffs with just a touch of grind and powerviolence meddling in the songwriting, and a thick but buzzsaw guitar sound to drive the point home. Everything after *Aborted Teen Generation* is all at least decent, but the USHC influence seems to diminish, and the crust, blastbeats, and herky-jerky song structures get a bit more prominent. DS-13 and their musical contemporaries went from being ubiquitous and inescapable to seemingly forgotten almost overnight, and while not all of those bands stand the test of time, I'm glad that this discography now exists so that punks who cut their teeth later on can hear it all and make up their own minds about the band's worth. (DG)
(Havoc / Spela Snabbare)

DURS COEURS – "Dur Dur Dur" LP

On their first LP, DURS COEURS plays anthemic and straightforward punk that reminds me of STIFF LITTLE FINGERS and NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS. On side A, the band sounds dark and brooding (hence the NHFTK reference) in a way that suits them, channelling their anger through chunky, palm-muted riffs and downtrodden vocals. Side B sounds a little stronger to my ears. They use a lot of good hooks and singalong choruses that have me thinking about AUSENCIA and SLF. Good work. Strong LP. (GH)
(Chaos Rural / Crucial / Discos MMM / Dure Realite / Imminent Destruction / Maloka / Rat Trap)

ELECTRIC STREET QUEENS – "Queen Sized" LP

ELECTRIC STREET QUEENS is a trashy, screechy band from Boston. The lyrics are jokey, kitschy and glammy. The music is basic, simplistic rock. Songs titles like "Hot Pants From Hell" and "Teenage Death Girls" double down on that idea. (CK)
(Little Queenie)

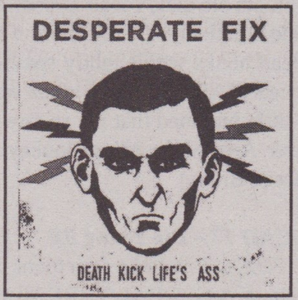
EN KERNAGHAN PROJEKT EXPERIENCE BANNED 1997 – "Divine Body Care / Things Are Constantly Changing"

Australian Ethan Kernaghan is the man behind EN KERNAGHAN PROJEKT EXPERIENCE BANNED 1997. On this 7" he continues on his interesting garage rock journey. "Divine Body Care" employs new-agey Indian sounds with hypnotic lyrics about the necessity of proper hygiene. "Things Are Constantly Changing" channels BILLY CHILDISH's current mantra of looking back on the past, but with a twist. Kernaghan argues that things are changing for the better. I'd say they are. I look forward to see where Kernaghan goes next. (CK)
(Ever/never)

FACADA – "Nehum Puto de Attitude" LP

This one is an entire album of covers from these Brazilian grind freaks. They grind up all sorts of songs, from NAPALM DEATH to BAD BRAINS to NIRVANA. They even do a pretty amusing Danzig impersonation on "Hybrid Moments." These guys are super sick, and they're good at playing other bands' songs, but it's hard to get that excited about a cover album. (BA)
(Everyday Hate / Läjä)

DAGGER
Writhing in the Light of the MOON



DURS COEURS
DUR DUR DUR

QUEENSIZED

NENHUM PUTO DE ATITUDE

Fear of Extinction

FREAK GENES
Playtime

FEAR OF EXTINCTION / PASSIV DÖDSHJÄLP – split LP

Both bands offer up five tracks apiece on this "North-East D-Beat Lobotomy," though potential buyers should be prepared to experience sounds that are quite removed from the stereotypical "D-beat" experience on both sides. FEAR OF EXTINCTION offer up D-beats by the truckload, but they're supporting some intense metallic / melodic crust that owes as much to DISSECTION as DISCHARGE. Similarly, PASSIV DÖDSHJÄLP have more than a pinch of metal in their sound, though it hews a bit closer to a more traditional D-beat style with a bit of NIHILIST / ENTOMBED in the mix, particularly in the swarm-of-bees guitar sound. I appreciate the raw, shouted hardcore vocals that take the place of the more traditional deep metal-influenced growls as they give the band a more immediate and vital attack. Their cover of Swedish contemporaries ACHILLES is pretty sick, with bones of blackened crust carrying a strangely fragile, almost screamo-esque atmosphere. (AU)
(Halvfabrikat / Mangel Wax / Phobia / Rawmantic Disasters / Up the Punx)

FITNESS – "Puppet Show and Fitness" EP

FITNESS walk a well trodden path of urban Midwestern pop punk. These lads are taking the playbook of DILLINGER 4 and SCREECHING WEASEL and injecting some mediocre THIN LIZZY-style guitar wanking, as well as a touch of slick, radio ready feel. The lyrics don't smack of rock'n'roll excess, but they're not the types for those seeking introspection or have a bunch of sensitive flower feelings. If you're always on the hunt for some new pop punk to party to, this might be the one for you. (LP)
(Don't Panic)

FREAK GENES – "Playtime" LP

HIPSHAKES-related punkin' from Brexitville. Any associative punk tag that would include the word "garage" is erased by this new outfit. Buzz-pop is the name of the game on *Playtime* and it's all short, sharp shocks that are moderately cheeky yet still punk like STUKAS or any number of cool Stiff Records one-offs. (MC)
(Alien Snatch!)

GENERALS – "Chaotic Life" EP

Goddamn, this is not what one would expect from a hardcore record from a Finnish band. This has none of the quirkiness of traditional Finnish hardcore, though it does feature a vicious edge that ties in indirectly to bands like KAAOS or TERVEET KÄDET. At heart this is blazing '80s worship with a killer sense of melody. Think ANTI, ANGRY SAMOANS, and the CROWD or more contemporarily, CAREER SUICIDE. Short songs with mean vocals, nasty guitar leads (there's that rusty razor blade Finnish sound) and depressing lyrics. The rhythm section is absolutely killer, with some beautifully gross cymbal sounds and rock-solid bass playing. Every song is killer, but goddamn "Red Ball" is a fuckin' hit, from the first note to the final "fuck you!" This is a fucking great EP. (AU)
(Kämäset Levyt / Ratbite / Rock'n'roll Bullshit)

THE GENERATORS – "Last of the Pariahs" LP

This was a really rough listen. The degree to which this sounds like mid-rate '90s alternative rock was almost too much for me to finish the album. What we have here is a reissue of the GENERATORS's 2011 album on Dr. Strange. Tepid choruses and cliched lines give way to mediocre bridges and verses. The hooks were not kind to my ears and I'm not sure where their pop sensibility is coming from, but it's uncalled for. (JC)
(Dr. Strange)

THE GEROS – "Razor Dog / Don't Call Me"

Peer into my frontal lobes and you'll see framed photos all the GEROS with a candle burning under each. My mild (not mild) fixation with Japanese slash-punk hinders my ability to interact with immediate peers, mainly because they aren't consumed with the Thunders-on-uppers scree that informs both sides of this ace single, which is something you envision in dreams but rarely in reality. The sleeve has skulls and chains and dog collars on it, so you know it's at least as good as WILD THING. Big flamin' kudos to Drugula and Killer Boy for spreading this stateside...Almost too killer! (MC)
(Secret Mission)

GRIT – "Diamond" EP

Dark melodic punk in the vein of STREET EATERS but with a slight Oi! influence. Songs are simplistic but catchy. This is their latest EP and it's just as good as their last EP *Ghost Estates*. (CR)
(Contraszt! / Distroy / Pumpkin / Ultra Peace / Visions of Warning)

HATERS – "Chronic" EP

Within the four songs on this EP, HATERS sounds similar to "classic" '90s pop punk, dreamy pop and whatever it is that WEEZER does. Guitar-heavy, hook-laden and sweet as fuck. The pop punk kid in you (not me) will not let this come off the turntable for days. Super crisp production and layers of guitar give this a full sound that demands attention. (GH)
(Everything Sucks)

HEXHAMMER – LP

Here you have some bombastic blackened thrash—think early SKELETONWITCH meets some very fine Scandinavian crust punk. Mix all the quality elements of MOTÖRHEAD, a rickety freight train, CENTINEX, HAAPOJA, CIRITH UNGOL, and IRON MAIDEN, put them in a keg and pump it up. "Skjöll (The Sun-Eater)" was my favorite. This debut can seem a bit drawn out at times, but then again, so can pain. (JR)
(Filthy Rat)

HIGHLEY – LP

This album took almost a decade for Kevin Carl to complete with the help of a handful of other people including Bill Stevenson from the DESCENDENTS. This entire vibe is a spiritual successor to NO

USE FOR A NAME (RIP). "About You" is a dead ringer for a lost TONY SLY (RIP) track. Also, as a former college freshman who kept a copy of *Howl* in his pocket wherever he went, I'm an unabashed sucker for the line "*Like the last time Ginsberg saw Kerouac*" in "Goodnight Old Ghost." This is old man pop punk for forever young people. (RH)
(Wallride)

HONEY JOY – LP

Decent indie pop / pop punk from UK band HONEY JOY. Sensitive punx who like SOAR, TRY THE PIE, and JOYRIDE! would be into this, but it has more bite, even in their slow jams like "Nutsey Close." Their bouncier tunes "Witches" and "Floreana" are my faves tho. These songs don't shy away from their poppier side, and they don't need to. (CR)
(Everything Sucks)

HOTHEAD – "Snake Song / I Don't Want to Talk About It"

I was obsessed with the HOTHEAD tape that Sister Polygon put out, a perfect punk / pop masterwork in line with SHOP ASSISTANTS. Someone should make that into a record! This is a 7" from the Richie Records singles club, a constant relay of good taste, and as these two remarks would insinuate this is a *must buy* release. It's a covers EP, shambolic end of night feelings, playing with your friends and sort of losing your mind, not wanting to be anywhere else etc. Nostalgic and lonely? "Snake Song" is by TOWNES VAN ZANDT—this version is full of doomed wildness and insurrection. The CRAZY HORSE cover is sick, a crashing tribute to a genius guitarist by another genius guitarist. (LG)
(Richie)

IRON CHIC – "Shitty Rambo" EP

IRON CHIC have been a band for about ten years and have put out about as many records. *Shitty Rambo* was their first 7" and it's a tasty slice of LATTERMAN / RVIVR style pop punk. This is the type of shit that DEAD BROKE built their house out of. Sentimental, anthemic, melodic; if you like that kind of stuff then this is a perfect 7" to add to your collection, or replace your eight-year-old original copy that you partied all over and wrecked. (LP)
(Dead Broke)

JAILBUS – "Flexo" EP

Manic, blistering punk from Iowa fucking City. Dirty and fast, with vocals that remind me of Scott Kelly on the *Aberration* EP. The absence of a lyric sheet makes it hard to figure out what side of what fence they are on, which is pretty important to me since it sounds like they listen to BUZZ*OVEN. I hope they're weirdos, and not shitheads, because this is pretty killer. (DZ)
(self-released)

JIM AND THE FRENCH VANILLA – "Afraid Of The House" LP

This is a solo project of Jim Blaha from the BLIND SHAKE. It sounds like that band. There are pounding drums with indie rock vocal stylings and herky-jerky guitars. It's high-energy stuff. (CK)
(Dirtnap)

KAUZ OF AFFLICTION – "The New Norm" CD

Fuck…Hawaii's KAUZ OF AFFLICTION…I was going to try to be funny or constructive, but this is just *bad*. Punk / metal with cringe-worthy lyrics and out of tune vocals. Hints of nu-metal and butt rock… They cover ZIGGY MARLEY and L7 without crediting either. Woof. (GH)
(self-released)

LAZY CLASS – "Pressure Rising" EP

German Oi! with a strong glam metal edge with songs about sticking to the man and getting out from under. It sounds like a different singer on each side but I don't think that's true. The guitar just starts wailing more and things get a little more rock'n'roll. My favorite song is probably "Before The Dawn" which turns up the Euro via Hollywood glam'n'roll to the max not unlike SMACK or the better COCKNEY REJECTS rocker tunes. The accents add to the likability of this release and it's well worth a spin. (RO)
(Spirit Of The Streets)

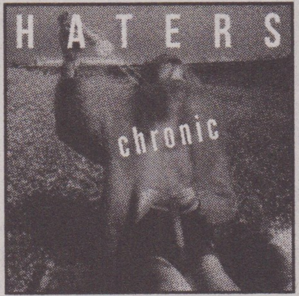
THE LILLINGTONS – "Project 313" EP

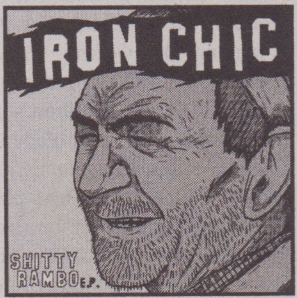
Anyone who knows pop punk knows that Kody Templeman is a fucking genius. I knew this release would be amazing before I even laid the needle on the record and I wasn't disappointed. The EP starts with "Until The Sun Shines," which sounds more like Templeman's other band, TEENAGE BOTTLEROCKET, than the old LILLINGTONS. The second track, "Rubber Room" brings back a *Death By Television*-era vibe with a sweet chorus. Side B opens with the title track capturing the band's obsession with sci-fi and the last track, "It's On," has a Ramones-core feel. Fuck! All you new pop punk bands out there, if you want an example of what a perfect band sounds like, you need to listen to this! The LILLINGTONS are the best pop punk band in the world! (DB)
(Red Scare)

LIMP WRIST – "Facades" LP

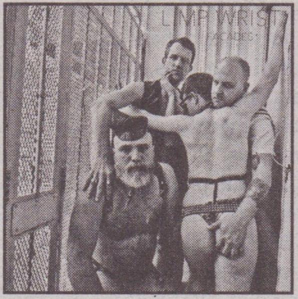
Please name another hardcore band that has been active for nearly 20 years and only gets more vicious. LIMP WRIST have been destroying with every release and this one is no different…but it *is* different. They slow it down it just a little bit (only a little) and give Martin (one of the most instantly recognizable vocalists in punk history) room to fucking growl through songs about resisting assimilation, breaking down sexual barriers, and respecting the hidden queer histories that are so often swept under the rug. Side two might be the spot where they lose the straight punks who have been screaming along to "I Love Hardcore Boys" since day one though. It consists of three dancey, electronic songs mostly produced by guitarist Scott Moore (who just released his own LP in a similar style) that wouldn't sound the least bit out of place in a queer club at 3:00 a.m. It rules. *Also,* there is a 40 page newsprint zine inside that includes the lyrics along with incredible art and writing by notable queer artists from all over the world. I can't really do it justice in these few sentences, but it is an essential document of resistance, history, art and photography from the dirty and overlooked corners of

GRIT
DIAMOND





THE LILLINGTONS
TEMPLEMAN · O'HARA · LAURENCE · VOLONINO
PROJECT 313



MODERN CONVENIENCE
WHAT U?

THE MONOLITHS

queer culture. As the years go on, LIMP WRIST only seems to get more honed, pissed, nasty, thirsty, smart and fierce. If this isn't already on your turntable, it should be. (GH)
(Lengua Armada / La Vida Es Un Mus)

LOST TAPES – LP
If something is derivative of JOY DIVISION (i.e., ESTRANGED, ARCTIC FLOWERS) then it better bang. Just not quite enough bang for your buck on this one. I admire the effort but would rather reach for any of the aforementioned artists' records. Plus…the cover? Unless any of you were like actually chained in a dungeon as a child and forced to wear a mask, then the cover is a bit of a "miss." Try less hard and play faster please. Thank you. (P$)
(Rockstar)

DION LUNADON – LP
Frantic, high-energy tunes à la TY SEGALL. Things are overblown and sound aggressive, but with a melodic underbelly. In fact, some songs even sound poppy. DION LUNADON was formerly of the D4 and is currently the bassist for A PLACE TO BURY STRANGERS. This is his debut solo LP. It's fun stuff. (CK)
(Agitated)

MANE – "Alpha Female" LP
San Francisco locals MANE have been playing their tightly wrought doomed post-punk for a while now. Their sound veers from an almost grunge swaggering PJ HARVEY snarl to a blackened GANG OF FOUR feeling, their chanted incantational vocals remind me of women from Italian horror movies playing nervous charged post-punk…The lyrics are radical and personal, about capitalism and hunger and feminism and friendship, a portrait of being female in this toxic world. Post-punk is such a generic moniker, I think of it being that herky jerky art school sound of '79, but MANE are embodying something between that and what people in the current DIY sphere would claim, veering more towards SIOUXSIE and BAUHAUS. My favorite songs on the record are "White Knuckles" and "In the Dark of the Night." (LG)
(Digital Regress)

MODERN CONVENIENCE – "What U?" EP
Nashville based power trio specializing in frantic edgy guitar riffage with echo chamber vocals. They play it both ways, speedy and catchy or slower and anthemic. Keeping it real in 2017. (GB)
(What's For Breakfast)

MONOLITHS – LP
You'd never guess it from the psychedelic painting cover, but MONOLITHS are quite an angry bunch. A Denmark-based power trio, ex-COLA FREAKS, this is heavy bonehead rock, in the '70s sense—the guitar has that thin trebly crunch like SABBATH or THIRD WORLD WAR. Doomy and unrelenting for most of Side A, but they eventually loosen things up into some dirgey psychedelic zones as well as a couple of catchy broken English melodic punk winners that remind me of '70s Dutch punks PANIC. Needs a bit more time to percolate here, but sounds like a grower. (GB)
(Mastermind)

NAKED BEAST – CD
Noting "Featuring Members of the Legendary San Francisco Punk Band CRIME" on the cover is a double-edged sword. People will rush to judgement because this doesn't sound like CRIME. Yet that association may be the reason they are listening to it. Record promotion can be a tough call. Half of the eight songs on this record are actually spoken word pieces from JOHNNY STRIKE's books backed with sparse musical accompaniment. They're interesting. STRIKE's a good writer and I like hearing him read his stuff. The other four are the actual songs. "Emergency Music Ward" is the most CRIME-like even though it is too slow, lacks distortion, and gets weighed down with the mid song instrumental break. The best song is "Aether Station" which sounds like what CRIME may have sounded like if they were kids in the '10s. It doesn't sound like "classic" CRIME or even anything happening these days. That's a good thing. If NAKED BEAST could keep following that trajectory they'd be onto something great. (CK)
(Guitars & Bongos)

DAVID KENNETH NANCE – "Amethyst / Manager Special"
My recent obsession, my corn-fed reward for this shit year, this NANCE fellow. To say that his bent and blown rock has recently poked my canals deeply would be true, and "Amethyst" continues the trend: downer guitar that muddles into a sunrise, effective, hairy and inspired. I ball my fists and pound them repeatedly into my temples, right along to the beat of "Manager Special," a tune that leaves me living thanks only to its brevity. Wonderful and primitive and a tale of our times, or at least mine anyway. Should I mention this is part of Richie's annual singles series? Hear at once or become my enemy. (MC)
(Richie)

THE NERVOUS – LP
Wow, this band moves *sloooowww.* Their first EP came out in 2009 and then they recorded this LP in 2014. It's just seeing the light of day in final form here in 2017. It's like Denver (their hometown) meets Copenhagen circa 2002 meets Southern California circa 1981 as seen through the DIY punk lens. Jangly, straightforward punk with hooks in each song. The singing is rough and raw in all the right ways, but the lyrics leave a bit to be desired. Overall, a really good LP. (GH)
(self-released)

NEW TRASH – "Circle" CD
This Belgian band sounds very late '90s US. Four songs in the Fat / Dr. Strange Records vein with ocals in English, this is pop punk with a trace of ska punk reminiscent of maybe LAGWAGON with debut LP era PROPAGANDHI. Very generic with off-key vocals at times. This made no impression on me. (RL)
(Bearded Punk)

NIGHTFALL – "Deadly Game" EP

Whoa. This one fuckin' burns hot. Like really hot. Four screaming bursts of high energy D-beat that stops and starts on a dime, with howling vocals that rely on intensity instead of effects. There is not one drop of bullshit on this record—not one wasted riff or transition, not one thing overlooked. The guitar solo in "No Surrender" is a perfect example....it's brief and not overbearing, but still commands your attention. This entire record DEMANDS your attention. And then "Captive" closes the motherfucker with a stomp that makes me want to destroy *everything*. This is the fuckin' surprise of the month, highest possible recommendation. (WN)
(Ryvolte)

NOTCHES – "Change My Mind" EP

This is super upbeat pop punk, very much what you would expect from Dead Broke. Fuzzy guitars, bouncy songs, and some fairly clean vocals that are unfortunately a little bit buried in the mix. Although this sounds similar to many of the band's labelmates, it leans heavily towards '90s bands like SINKHOLE with a bit of a late '80s pop punk / alternative feel (like maybe BIG DRILL CAR). The five songs breeze by pretty quickly, probably not blowing anyone away but not bad either. (PA)
(Cat Dead Details Later / Dead Broke)

NOTHINGTON – "Cobblestones / The Last Time"

"Cobblestones" is bass drum thumping whiskey-throated singalong punk. It's like a good sandwich, not difficult but still super satisfying. The acoustic B-side, "The Last Time," is substantially better at full speed and loud, so this version really only serves as a curiosity. (RH)
(Red Scare)

NOTS – "Cruel Friend / Violence"

NOTS remain one of DIY punk's best kept secrets on their seventh 7" single. One of the tensest records in their rather stiff discography, "Cruel Friend" is a driving march to oblivion. Featuring a bassline similar to early KILLING JOKE records but with more of a sense of movement than they ever had. Post-punk sans pomp. Dropping the guitar entirely, "Violence" is a haunting, synth-driven piece that evokes the sort of grim and foggy nights that would make people feel ill at ease. JOHN CARPENTER should listen to "Violence" before he releases another tepid solo record. (JD)
(Goner)

NO USE FOR A NAME – "Rarities Vol. 1: The Covers" CD

This is a collection of cover songs done over the years while this band was active. Quite an impressive selection of tunes from the POGUES, CHEAP TRICK, DAG NASTY, DEPECHE MODE, and even KISS to name just a few. Although this brings back sad thoughts of leader Tony Sly's passing in 2012, this was a fun listen. All done in quality NO USE FOR A NAME pop punk style. (RL)
(Fat Wreck)

OBNOXIOUS YOUTH – "Disturbing the Graves" LP

O' heshers, hear my call! Put down your marijuana pipes fashioned out of beer cans, stop combing your mullets and waxing your muscle cars, and gather 'round to bang yer fuckin' heads to this! This is barely punk enough to cover in this magazine, only saved by the hints of crossover in their old-school thrash sound. Divebombs, over-the-top solos, and praising Satan are the order of the day here, with influences touching on early METALLICA, later CRO-MAGS, VENOM, and CRYPTIC SLAUGHTER. The drummer keeps things rooted in punk, eschewing double-bass in favor of DRI-style attacking speed and lightning fills while the guitarists live out their thrash metal dreams and the reverb-soaked vocals reign over it all. Some cool organ parts pop up here and there to add atmosphere as well. The warm analog recording is a huge plus as is the super loud mastering. This is definitely a record built to blast at a rowdy party and / or satanic orgy. Thrashers (and friends) only! (AU)
(Critical Mass)

PAINT FUMES – "If It Ain't Paint Fumes It Ain't Worth A Huff" CD

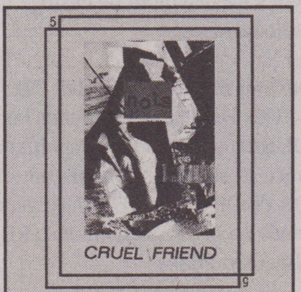
Unfortunately PAINT FUMES aren't Stiff Records loving youngsters like their record cover would indicate. Instead they play modern fuzzy garage rock. Their style goes from frantic to dreamy with snarling vocals and plunky guitar noodling. I like it. (CK)
(Get Hip)

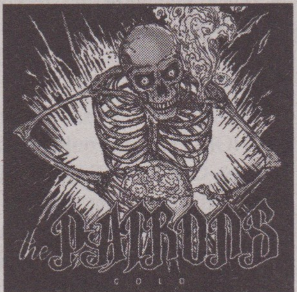
PARIS VIOLENCE – "Best Of Volume 2, 2003–2008" CD

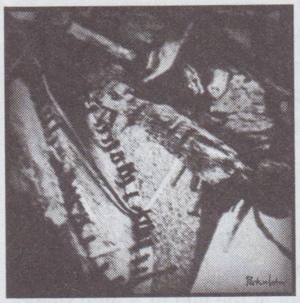
Really solid Paris dark wave Oi! with rugged vocals and occasionally some surprisingly jaunty keyboard leads that make me wanna Riverdance...It somehow all works together really well. The way it blends disparate sounds together in a way that defies expectations is the best part about this CD. Overall the songs sound anthemic and unique and there's character in the sound. It's also mixed / mastered in a way that suits the songs well. It all sounds cohesive, even while it changes lyrical themes. While the first half is dark wave Oi!, meaning spirit of the streets and all that, the second half is Oi! dark wave, meaning like do the goth shuffle. Know what I mean? Both are good, but the first half is especially solid. (P$)
(Combat Rock)

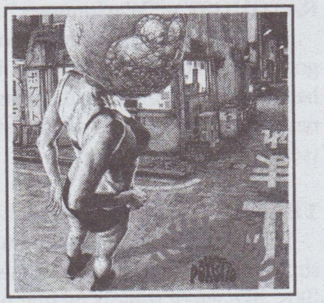
PARIS VIOLENCE – "Orage Des Annees Noires Best Of Vol. 1 1998–2003" CD

I know nothing of this French Oi! New Wave band but after doing the least possible research I've learned that they are pretty much the one man project of Flav Paris Violence with and without various band members. They / he have released a fuck-ton of music since forming in 1998. Thankfully I'm only subjected to nineteen tracks here, most of which are pretty weak. His vocals are strong and gruff and there are some decent melodies but the horrible production, cheap synthesizers and drum machines combined with '80s jazz metal fusion guitar gives much of this the vibe of a super nerdy bedroom black metal tape or an '80s video game. The CD does have a lot of passion and improves









PLAX
CLEAN FEELING

progressively with dramatic songwriting. On songs like "Douche Froide" or "Budapest 56" you can almost overcome the bad drum machine and guitar solos to think some of this might work live with a solid band. At best it's maybe like if CAMERA SILENS or SNIX made a video game soundtrack with JAN HAMMER on guitar. (RO)
(Combat Rock)

PARIS VIOLENCE – "Promesses d'Immortalité" CD

So far as I can ascertain, this is a French duo with a penchant for '20s era boudoir aesthetics and moody / rocky / goth musical stylings. Instrumentation is vocals (low and growly, with lots of reverb), guitar (again, lots of spacey reverb, and some nifty guitar solos, which may be provided by a third chap), keyboards and some samples. When not dressed in late 19th century gentleman's garb, the lads seem to be skinheads (short hair, Fred Perry's, tattoos), which makes it all a little more mystifying / interesting. Musically, there's very little uptempo stuff (and very little drum machine), with the more interesting of the long songs sounding reminiscent of the DAMNED's "Curtain Call" or the BLOOD's *Se Perare Nex* mini-LP. BERURIER NOIR they ain't, but then again, the lyrics are printed too small for these elderly eyes to try and attempt my schoolboy French on. (RK)
(Randale)

PARIS VIOLENCE – "Temps De Crise" CD

This is pretty wild. Late '90s super sloppy French Oi! / street punk vibe. At best, this is pretty cool. Super lo-fi, out of tune, piss poor timing punk with a nursery rhymes / in-the-pocket style bass player is kinda right up my alley. At their worst, however, it's a guy on a Casio keyboard trying to play ska, and it is even worse than you'd think. There's one song that sounds like they forgot to put the chorus in, so they just pressed the pause button and punched in these crazy as hell, out of place whoa-oh-ohs. I wanna hate on this so bad, but it's such an oddball offering that it's really precious. If I ever find this on vinyl, that fucker's going home with me. (DZ)
(Islika Productions)

THE PATRONS – "Gold" 10"

This French band seem to be big fans of the mid '80s SST records catalog, especially BLACK FLAG, SAINT VITUS, and SCREAMING TREES. "No Freedom" almost has you singing the lyrics to "Loose Nut" along with it. Unfortunately they deteriorate into the need to be tuneful and melodic negating any kind of an edge and dooming this record to be filed directly down the shitter. The cover art blows too. (RO)
(Ben Salad)

PERKULATOR – LP

Umeå, Sweden hardcore with a healthy amount of blastbeats, metallic melodies, and breakdowns. It's an odd mix, honestly. Kind of like AT THE GATES meets ANTISCHISM. The album starts very groove-forward, almost funk in the winding and groovy bass and drum intro, and I was somewhat caught off guard when the grinding started. This doesn't appeal to me a whole lot, but would probably get the motors going of fans of mathy, metallic hardcore or maybe fans of Swedish crusters TO WHAT END? (JC)
(Crush & Create)

PICTURE FRAME SEDUCTION – "Interrupted Piss" EP

Let's just start with the cover: a scantily clad, cartoon-punk woman kneeling over some liquid that says "Interrupted Piss" in it. Why? It looks like a NOBODYS record cover from 1996 and has nothing to do with the music. The music on the record is kinda go-nowhere punk that packs no punch whatsoever. It's not that bad at first, but the songs just keep going on and on and on…They keep repeating the same lines and you wonder if it'll ever end. The closer "Everything" is fairly catchy in a classic punk way, but is just too long. This band used to be the FRAMES (from 1978) who decided to reform in 2002. This is always a bad move. Don't do it. (GH)
(Cider City)

PINKU SAIDO – "Poketta" LP

This is cool—it's unique but accessible enough to have a timeless quality to the sound. Can't really tie it down to an era so to speak. Catchy melodic punk with sikk vokillz and enough oomph not to be syrupy. It's an interesting and fun listen all the way through. They seem to have found their groove volleying between playing four chord punk, rock'n'roll riffs, and super triumphant open chords. Each song seems like a differently nuanced variation on that formula. I like it. Worth checking out just because of the way it pops. (P$)
(Blackhole / Et Mon Cul C'est Du Tofu? / MALOKA / Mutant / No Way Asso)

PLASMALAB – "Love / Life" LP

Nasty sludge with a shit ton of flange. It's a repetitious hypnotic plodding grunge. Featuring a slow chugga chugga from the guitar with the drums on pretty much the same cave stomp throughout. This is a swamp of a less melodic STP or L7 with a less goofy FLIPPER thud. Gross and heavy early SONIC YOUTH vibes but on the more bored spectrum instead of the fucked freakout of *Confusion Is Sex*. (MM)
(Bruised Tongue)

PLAX – "Clean Feeling" LP

PLAX features a raft of modern Texas punk luminaries from the likes of OBN IIIS and SPRAY PAINT, which doesn't really give much away in terms of the sound of this record. Driving, upbeat (but only truly *fast* on a couple of songs) punk with many layers of scratchy guitar and Krautrock synths. The detached, pissed off, spoken-shouted vocals can sound like David Yow fronting DEAD AND GONE one minute, with echoes of URANIUM CLUB the next. This one bears repeated listens—could be a grower. (AM)
(Super Secret)

PREENING – "Beeters" EP

One of my favorite local bands to see, PREENING play a liberating blend of jazzy hardcore and no wave skronk. Malfunctioning machine-

music rhythms form a propulsive underpinning to vocal chants and saxophone explorations. Side B's "Plaza Scare" layers multiple sax lines to great effect. Mandatory. (AM)
(Digital Regress)

PRIMER REGIMEN – "No Futuro, No Solucion" EP

Flawless UK82 from Bogotá's PRIMER REGIMEN updated and informed by Nuke York's brutal vocals and barks. Features members of other Bogotá greats such as DEAD HERO, FINAL, and SECTA, so you know this is top-notch. Despite being self-recorded, this sounds awesome. The guitar tone is perfect with slight post-punk chorus, there's tasteful vocal delay and a tight, in-the-pocket rhythm section. Crushing and brutal. Highly recommended and be sure to catch them on their tour of Canada (including Varning Fest) and Europe. (JC)
(Byllepest)

RASH – "Midnight Crooner" EP

I liked this band's huge-sounding, dark, noisy, and dissonant hardcore sound from their *Skinner Box* LP, but thought it lacked anything to really lure in the listener. However, they have outdone the shit out of themselves with these three focused and captivating songs that musically and lyrically capture the alienation of daily life and social bullshit. The first song is a relatively straightforward mid-pacer, whereas the other two are more pounding noise rock-influenced dirges, with the angsty / angry vocals ranting over everything. That two of the three songs are respectively near or over four minutes and not boring for even a second is quite a feat. (DG)
(Hawthorne Street / IFB)

RAT'S BLOOD – "Ugly" EP

These tracks are certainly fuckin' ugly. Six hardcore rippers from the D-beating heart of Dublin. The drums are tripping over themselves to lead this pack, the vocals sizzle like SCATHA, and nothing is overdone, yet everything is intense and polished from start to finish. At a brilliant bolt-charged pace *Ugly* delivers some crucial desperate crusty rhythms. This is off-kilter crazy D-beat, that is both familiar and also enigmatic. I do wish it were longer. Side B's track "Self Medication" is my cure-all. (JR)
(Distroy)

RATGHOST – "Discography" CD

RATGHOST kick off their prog-doom collection with ambient gloom, an echoing chamber blast of lunacy-laden Pacific Northwest grungy crust. There are subtle levels of cacophonic pulpit-spewing goth rock disappearing into fogs of clashing math metal and drone groove. Reminds me of SKAVEN, BARONESS, HIS HERO IS GONE, and HOT WATER MUSIC (without all the PMA). It's more like a cold toxic sewer of sludge, death, torment and plagues than that last one. This is a nice collection of abysmal gloomy post-hardcore that nestles somewhere between crust's bedpan and under the cover of a goth scene that wants them exterminated. (JR)
(self-released)

RATGHOST – "Warhammer" EP

Some heavy on the chugga post-hardcore out of Portland. They've got some decent riffs, and all the ponderous breakdowns you can handle. The problem is that these songs totally blend together, and never go anywhere. It's not the worst, but it's kind of a snoozer. (BA)
(self-released)

THE REMEMBERABLES – LP

This is fuzzed-out indie / alternative music. Mid-tempo, fairly catchy stuff but with dark, moody vocals. It is all leaning heavily towards the '90s, like every song is getting played out at the end of a high school movie from the era. OK, fine—it just flat out sounds like WEEZER but without the goofy aspect. It's more introspective and sad, a little shoegazy at times. The simple guitar leads, the guitar tone, the songwriting and even the vocal melodies sound like WEEZER (despite the vocal tone being way more JESUS AND MARY CHAIN). On the plus side, the songs are written well enough that you won't really care about the WEEZERisms. (PA)
(Adagio830)

ROOM 101 – "One Man Band" LP

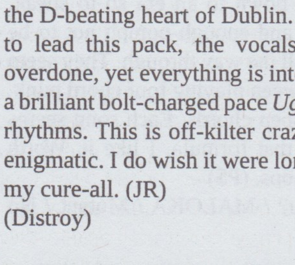
First off, this thing looks awesome. Winston Smith art screened on a handmade gatefold tip-on style sleeve...I discover that this is a one man band made up of a person who appears to be a mutant. So before I drop the needle I'm pretty juiced. And then I drop the needle. And those juices flow. Hard. Hi-NRG freak punk of the highest order—the kind of thing that could have come out of early '80s California but no one would have cared because it wasn't macho enough. But it's the quirk instead of the jerk that makes this one so good. Sounds for freaks, please and thank you. Early DEVO sensibilities abound, and fans of current stalwarts like URANIUM CLUB, etc. will want to take note here as well. Upon first listen, my favorite track is "Derelict Magnet," but I have a feeling the top spot is going to rotate depending on current mood. Recommended. (WN)
(Summary Execution)

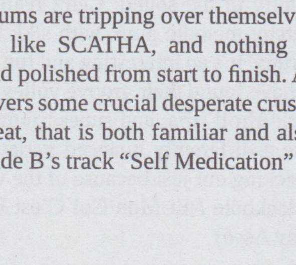
THE ROUSE – "Recordings" CD

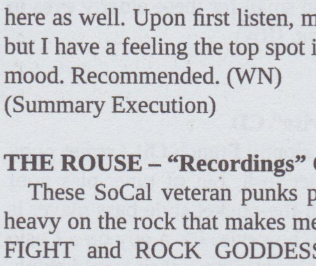
These SoCal veteran punks play some striped down darkish punk heavy on the rock that makes me think of LEGAL WEAPON, BITCH FIGHT and ROCK GODDESS. Lead vocalist Dezi has quite an impressive set of pipes and that paired with the HELL COMES TO YOUR HOUSE qualities on the darker tunes like "The Hurt" rescue this from the trash heap that the mediocre band name and uninventive album cover would lead me to throw it. (RO)
(self-released)

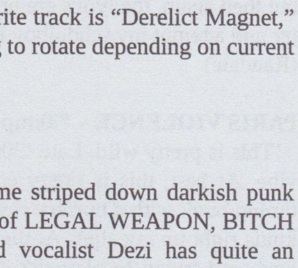
RUT – "Attraction" EP

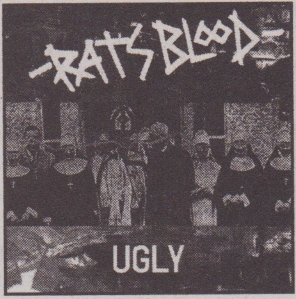
Santa Rosa, CA's RUT majorly step up their game on their first single. Their self-released demo tape from last year did not live up to the power of the members' other bands, COLUMNS and the almighty ACRYLICS, but this single smokes. Four tracks of noisy (but not noize—this ain't SWANKYS), scathing, and sometimes unpredictable



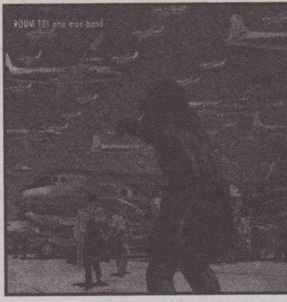








REMEMBERABLES



punk that would satisfy most fans of modern US groups such as BIB, Q, or FRIED EGG. RUT speak the language of contemporary DIY punk perfectly; all of the songs artfully let the stomping mosh parts flow naturally out of their more chaotic riffs. This should make the kids flip their goddamn shit across the dancefloor. (JD)
(Digital Regress)

RVIVR – "The Tide / Shaggy"

Reader, do better dual vocals than this. I dare you. You can't. These two songs are goddamned solid. (RH)
(Dead Broke)

SELKÄSAUNA – "Pyromaani…" 12"

Reach beyond the skull art and generic scratchy-letter band logo and discover sensational Finnish hardcore greatness! Riffs are great, vocals are fucked, and just a touch of slop in the delivery gives it that classic ramshackle feeling many of the Finnish hardcore greats had. I'm even thinking Japanese hardcore in the vein of ASSFORT or NO SIDE (or MINK OIL, anyone?). A few mid-paced fist-pumpers are thrown in for good measure, but the thrashers are where it's at. Somewhat formulaic and predictable overall, but a likely hit for fans of Finnish hardcore. Also served with the disc tightly stuck inside a PVC-like plastic dust sleeve—ack! Vinyl abuse! That shit will ruin the record over time. Toss that shit and put it in a nice acid-free paper sleeve, please. (MA)
(Punk Off)

SHAKING HEADS – LP

Sounds like lost recordings of HEART with overdubbed post-punk guitar. Bear with me here. SHAKINGS HEADS give a serious nod to PLEASURE LEFTISTS and ARCTIC FLOWERS punk gloom, and there are elements of CROOKED BANGS, albeit without French lyrics, but they also seem to be trying to pull off a SHEER MAG punk / '80s rock crossover, but with differing elements from both genres. Good thing I like HEART. (CR)
(Flyktsoda / Ken Rock)

SICK OF SHIT – "Fuck You Vol. 1" EP

Pedestrian crust à la BLOWN TO BITS or SCURVY DOGS. It's thick-sounding despite maintaining a fast pace, with furious and frantic but bleak melodies that back up a vocalist that will hold a scream like he never wants to talk again. I imagine seeing them live in Hamilton would cement the experience. (DG)
(Schizophrenic)

SICK SIDE – "Hienas Negras" EP

This Spanish band delivers some killer, thrashed-out hard-fucking-core! These guys are not even thinking about fucking around with these solid, straight ahead, and furious rippers. If you like getting real pissed off and running around in a circle, then this one is for you. Sick indeed! (BA)
(Prof Sny)

SITES N' SOUNDS – "The Night Is So Dark / T"

Far from mayhem, but winning and mysterious teenbeat from Pennsylvania '67. SITES N' SOUNDS look like squeaky clean kiddies in the boss photos adorning this reissue, but there's scum bubbling just underneath the surface, never boiling over though. "The Night Is So Dark" is moody and almost leads me to believe the actual boogie-man (or crippling fear thereof) was the impetus for the tune, driven by organ and aspirations. "T" is an instrumental groover, milky R&B, almost pristine...You wish they'd just cross over to the "bad neighborhood" rather than tip-toe up to its edge. No matter, they're reaping the benefits these 50 years later. New dentures for everyone! (MC)
(Slovenly)

SOCIETY'S DECLINE – "Toxic Waste" EP

Stockholm raw D-beat action. Six tracks. 100% by the numbers Swede-beat. (WN)
(Dark Elk / Kibou / Mangel Wax / Mundo en Kaos / Phobia)

SONIC ORDER – "Chokehold" EP

It's about the content, not the package, but for the second time this month, I'm pumped before I even listen just because the damn thing looks so good. English punks SONIC ORDER were good on the demo a while back (that contributed to the pumping up), but these doses of knuckle dragging ignorant hardcore are pure perfection to my ears. Listen to the tempo pick up after the intro to "Con Artist" and if you aren't mentally moshing then you might want to see a doctor. They float with ease between mid-tempo stomps and loose, off the rails hardcore—all of it ugly as sin (by design). My only complaint is the vocals—they are fierce as fuck, but reverbed and buried to the point where they are sometimes lost. A minor critique, really, though I fear that in the future this current trend will unfortunately and unnecessarily date many of this era's finer groups. But then again...who the fuck am I? I'm just an old man sitting in front of a computer. Whatever. This shit bangs. (WN)
(Byllepest / Doomtown)

STALE PHISH – "Pole Jams" LP

Skate rock and Oi! hybrid outta Michigan that sure ain't no BOOM AND THE LEGION OF DOOM. They are true die hard skaters but instead of DRUNK INJUNS I get PENNYWISE or a watered down FACTION. The 1998 Epitaph Records sound was never my jam but if it's yours you'll dig this one. For me it's a gnarly face plant. (RO)
(Not Like You)

STARVING WOLVES – "We Are One / Fuck The People"

Austin's STARVING WOLVES set out to do a thing...and they do the damn thing. It's catchy and anthemic and energetic arena / street punk. The chorus to "We Are One" is an instant classic, and will likely be stuck in my head all damn day. I'm sure it would be stuck in there longer if I were a hungry teenager. Dueling guitars give these two tracks a melodic rather than a metallic edge, and I laughed (to myself) when I made a mental LEFTÖVER CRACK comparison before noticing that Brad and Sturgeon were guests on one of the tracks. Mainstream

punks may know the band purely because the singer has been fronting CASUALTIES since Jorge's merciful departure from punk, but I'll take these two tracks over any CASUALTIES record since 1996. (WN)
(Boulevard Trash)

STREET CLONES – "Black Cypress Grove" LP

Two songs of swampy rock'n'roll, musically akin to early grunge sounds but with above-average guitar chops. The vocals are more ranted than sung, with a slight JELLO trill. Overall, these are a couple of catchy, memorable tunes. Limited to 300 and Jeff Clayton from ANTISEEN drew the cover. (AM)
(Mystery School)

SUICIDADE – "A Rebeldia Continua…" LP

Fierce Dutch anarcho-crust—a collection of lurching, down-tuned tracks spit out with a primal fury. Sometimes I feel like this stuff only exists in Europe (or, maybe it only *thrives* in Europe?), but it's kinda refreshing to hear snarling vocals reminding us of injustice and patriarchy and cops and all of the fuckin' *shit*—because that shit still sucks! The vocals here are intense as hell. There's an an amateurish appeal to some of the tracks, a simplicity that suits the style. Double kick drums propel the band with an awkward force, and guitars are appropriately buzzsawed to oblivion. Greater than the sum of its parts, the debut release from SUICIDADE is a keeper. (WN)
(self-released)

SUMSHAPES – "Cabin Biscuits" LP

Band reunions are fraught affairs, so when these three Glaswegian chaps formerly of DAWSON started playing together again, they opted to write new music under a new name. That's not to say they've completely left the past behind: there are moments here that sound very much like their old band, but on the whole it's a different kettle of pilchards. Still very much rooted in the post-C86 art punk of friends and contemporaries like the EX, BIG FLAME, DOG FACED HERMANS, and MINUTEMEN / FIREHOSE, *Captain Biscuits* incorporates elements of indie rock (even melodic guitars!), an overall more robust sound, and dare I say a more mature approach? Aye? Essential for fans of DAWSON or any other bands I mentioned in this review and highly recommended for everyone else. (AM)
(Et Mon Cul C'est Du Tofu? / Gruff Wit / Red Wig)

SUSHICORNER – "Konichiwow" LP

The first thing that one notices about the SUSHICORNER record is how loud it is. Not only is it loud, but it's trebly and piercing. This works out to the benefit of the record, with its lo-fi recording, clean guitar, and carnival synths. *Konichiwow* is an abrasive listen, and a fun one. If you find yourself wanting the junk sound and sheer idiocy of AUSMUTEANTS, this is almost got you. SUSHICORNER is less dumb than just goofy and weird. Whether you want some assaulting synth punk, weirdo pop touched garage, or just a bizarre listen, this LP might be for you. (LP)
(Alien Snatch!)

SVART MAGI – "All Cats Are Beautiful" LP

Gothenburg's SVART MAGI plays goth / deathrock-influenced post-punk. *All Cats are Beautiful* carries all the trademark elements that you would hope for in a record of this vein: crooning vocal melodies à la SIOUXSIE, sparse and reverbed guitar leads, and a driving rhythm section that will have you dancing. Songs like "Atlas" create a more dark, dissonant and ambient atmosphere while "Powerlove" and "Crawling" go in a campier direction with spooky keyboard leads. The more straightforward, upbeat "Spranga Saker" was a nice surprise that reminded me of SAMHAIN and nicely broke up the pace. Nothing new here but could definitely be an enjoyable record for fans of SIOUXSIE AND THE BANSHEES, 45 GRAVE, and SKELETAL FAMILY. And yes, ACAB. (BP)
(Mass Media / Rusted Teeth / Saudade)

SWIM TEAM – LP

Grungey power pop of the bratty '90s kind. There's a hint of the shimmer of SMASHING PUMPKINS, the hooks of VERUCA SALT and the harshness of BIKINI KILL. There is some slick studio trickery at work here—everything sounds very shiny and compressed with different effects on the vocals popping in for emphasis. For a contemporary comparison, try KITTEN FOREVER. (MM)
(Let's Pretend)

SYSTEM SYSTEM – "Isolation" LP

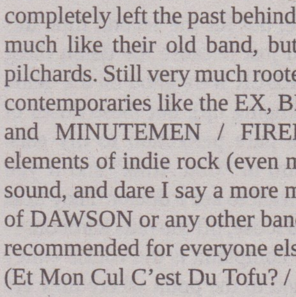
Welp, this is tough. Aggro modern metallic hardcore with crunchy guitars and occasional fast chugging to match, albeit with songs that vary in tempo and somewhat stand apart from each other. This is mainly for fans of chest tattoos and opening for TERROR. If this band writes a better subsequent record, I'll give credit where credit is due. (DG)
(Psychic Pain)

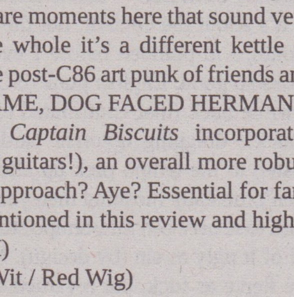
TIN FOIL – "Glamorous" LP

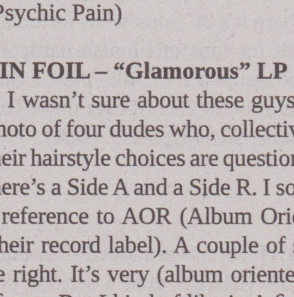
I wasn't sure about these guys. The cover features a black and white photo of four dudes who, collectively, have pretentious hair. Individually, their hairstyle choices are questionable. Together, they're annoying. Also, there's a Side A and a Side R. I somehow convinced myself that that was a reference to AOR (Album Oriented Rock), and not "Almost Ready" (their record label). A couple of songs in and I'm thinking that I might be right. It's very (album oriented) rock'n'roll, in a '60s and '70s kind of way. But I kind of like it. A five-minute long song? That's typically a deal-breaker for me. Not here. Five songs per side? What the fuck? Is this 1974? I'm still into it. It's mid-tempo and catchy. It's got too much jangly guitar to pass the punk test and it gets a little trashy at times, but it's just odd enough to be impossible not to like. It has a common theme of reaching back to the '60s and '70s, which ties it all back to the cover photo. This is good, really good. (KK)
(Almost Ready)

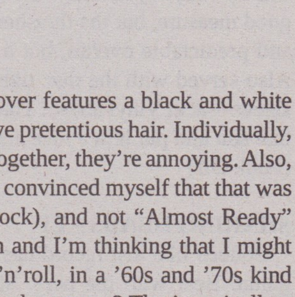
TODAY'SHITS – "Girl or Two" LP

This is a funny one. Every time I think I've got it pegged, some other element comes in. It's definitely power pop. And it's delicate, with almost

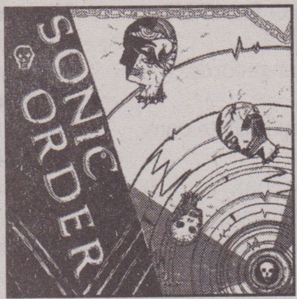


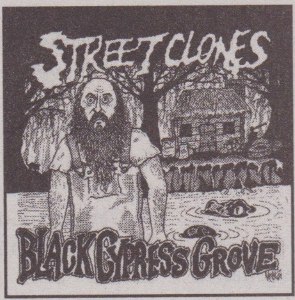


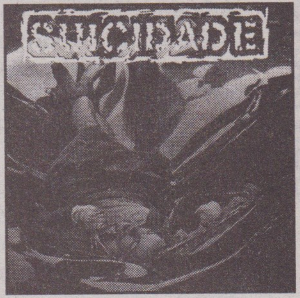




Society's Decline







whispery vocals. But then there's a surf element. Then there's a JESUS AND MARY CHAIN element. And some of it sounds like of CIAO BELLA or KIDS ON A CRIME SPREE. There's even some NOBUNNY thrown in (a name never to be spoken in these parts). At any rate, if you're a fan of ethereal power pop, here it is. Good stuff. (KK)
(Randy)

TROTS – LP

The highlights from the debut album of these four AFAB people in Sweden hit harder and more concisely than most hardcore records do. Combining scathing and blunt feminist lyrics with '80s NYHC-inspired riffing, the good songs here are often stronger than other bands that pull from that era. There are some clunkers (mostly in the middle of the album) that prevent the album from attaining greatness, but the rest of the tracks burn from the sort of fury that only those fighting to have their voices heard can make. The record ends with an accurate cover of L7's "Shove" that manages to fit in with the rest of the album due to conceptual, but not stylistic, similarities. (JD)
(Crush & Create)

WRITHING SQUARES TOO – "Summer Singles Series 2017" EP

Sounds like someone's been listening to old JOY DIVISION boots. I'd have guessed that this was a live recording due to the voluminous echo, but this appears to be a studio jobbie. Epic shambolic gloominess, with an apparent sense of humor; they split this mess of a track in half over two sides! Great stuff if you dig early UK post-punk and deathrock. I certainly wish there were more bands mining this territory. (GB)
(Richie)

YES – "E.P. #1" EP

Fast to mid-paced upbeat punk with jangly and relatively clean-tone guitars, and vocals that are earnestly shouted and a bit muffled. Likely drawing from the same early '80s LA punk and proto-hardcore pool as, say, the B-LINES or the various mid '00s Scandi-throwbacks. They do a good ANGRY SAMOANS cover, so there you go. The riffs are catchy, the songwriting is capable, and the record captures what I imagine is a fun live band, but there are no real hooks or bite to really push this beyond the realm of "good." Hopefully they can do better than this on EP #2. (DG)
(Crapoulet / Dirty Guys Rock / Donnez-Moi Du Feu / Lanterna Pirata)

THE ZOOMERS – "Exist" LP

Having re-hipped the universe to this phenomenal Louisiana DIY outfit via the reish of their lone 7", Mighty Mouth does us all one-better by vinylizing their cassette opus *Exist*. It's wonderful, natch: completely zonked rock, unlearned patchwork punk that contains the comparable magic of SIMPLY SAUCER or SUICIDE or MODERN LOVERS, though maybe they're all just 'luded to the gills. Wondrous shit, essential even. (MC)
(Mighty Mouth)

V/A – "I Hate My Fucking Band: A Japanese M.O.T.O. Tribute Album" CD

As the title says this is a Japanese band tribute to M.O.T.O. to accompany his latest tour of Japan. There are some good bands on here: the TWEEZERS, the FADEAWAYS, THEE MIGHTY FEVERS, MELLVINS, the LET'S GO'S, etc. and they do want they can with the poppy punk stylings of M.O.T.O. tunes. It is weird that M.O.T.O. "covers" himself on this, though not really unexpected. (CK)
(Secret Mission)

V/A – "Oi! The Tape Volume One Official Bootleg" LP

I'm not sure why there's a drawing of Robert Collins getting beat up by a skinhead on the cover. He seems like a nice enough guy. Crowd Control Media, one of the bigger purveyors of modern Oi! give us a nice vinyl reissue of a tape they put out previously, cutting half the songs this time around. It's pretty evenly split between winners and yackers, with the steaming vomit slightly leading. The best tracks stick to the basic yobo format. I like my Oi! midtempo and plodding with mild brainpower going on, like a good day's work. Best tracks are by DEGERATION, the HARDKNOCKS, CHARLES BRIGADE, RAMBLIN' FIRM, the OLD BREED, BAD ASSETS, and FOOTSOLDIER. The rest can eat my boot. (RO)
(Contra / Crowd Control Media)

V/A – "Music From the Film Ungovernable Force" EP

Holy shit, this is an actual thing! Here's the pull-quote: "Punk is a force to be reckoned with in *The Ungovernable Force*, a grindhouse film where punks and bums unite against fascist cops!!!" Fuckin' sold! These songs are on the soundtrack, and what a crazy mixed bag they are! The EP kicks off with WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET?'s "No More Pigs," followed by ZOUNDS's "Can't Cheat Karma" (is there a punk who hasn't heard this?). On the flip, the LUDE BOYS "Tip Top" is paired with the PAGANS's "Slow Street" (such a great fucking song!). For a record with a barcode on it, it's hard as fuck to figure out how to buy this. Whatever the deal is, this EP consists of four previously released songs so it's not essential by any means, though it's a pretty cool artifact to be associated with a punk-themed film. (AU)
(Brink Music)

CONTACTS

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Bruised Tongue: bruisedtongue.com
Byllepest: byllepestdistroofficial.bandcamp.com
Cat Dead Details Later: catdead.storenvy.com
Chaos Rural: chaosruralrecords.com
Christmas Pets: christmaspetscleveland@gmail.com
Cider City: cidercityrecords.com
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Combat Rock: combatrock.com
Contraszt!: diyordie.bandcamp.com
Crapoulet: crapoulet.fr
Critical Mass: criticalmass.se
Crowd Control Media: crowdcontrolmedia.limitedrun.com
Crucial: crucial-records.bandcamp.com
Crush & Create: crushandcreate.se
Dagger: daggernwi.bandcamp.com
Dark Elk: facebook.com/darkelk
Dead Broke: 139 Huber Ave, Holbrook, NY 11741; deadbrokerecords.com
Dirt Cult: 7930 NE Prescott St, Portland, OR 97218
Drunken Sailor: drunkensailorrecs@gmail.com; drunkensailorrecords.co.uk
Dead Heroes: deadheroesrecords.bigcartel.com
Deimos: deimosrecords.com
Digital Regress: digitalregress.com
Dirtnap: PO Box 7533, Madison, WI 53707; dirtnaprecs.com
Dirty Guys Rock: dirtyguysrock.com
Distroy: distroyrecords.com
Don't Panic: dontpanicitsadistro.bandcamp.com
Donnez-Moi Du Feu: donnez-moidufeu.blogspot.com
Doomtown: doomtownrecords.bandcamp.com
Dr. Strange: drstrange.com
Dure Realite: durerealite.wordpress.com
Est Mon Cul C'est Du Tofu?:, 2 Allée Pierre de Craon, 93360 Neuilly-Plaisance, FRANCE; moncul.org
Evacuate Records: PO Box 5211, Oceanside, CA 92051
Ever/Never: evernever-records.bandcamp.com
Everyday Hate: everydayhate.com
Everything Sucks: everythingsucksmusic.com,
Fat Wreck Chords: fatwreck.com
Filthy Rat: filthyratrecords.blogspot.com
Flyktsoda: facebook.com/flyktsodazine
Get Hip: PO Box 666, Canonsburg, PA 15317; gethip.com
Goner: goner-records.com
Good Land: goodlandrecords.com
Grind Your Mind: grindyourmind@gmail.com
Gruff Wit: gruffwit.co.uk
Halvfabrikat: halvfabrikat.net
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Laja: lajaminestore.com.br
Lanterna Pirata: lanternapiratarecords.blogspot.com
Lengua Armada: martincrudo.bigcartel.com
Let's Pretend: letspretendrecords.com
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Mystery School: mysteryschoolrecords.bigcartel.com
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No Way Asso: nowayasso.blogspot.fr
Not Like You: notlikeyourecords.com
Phobia: phobiarecords.net
Prof Sny: profsnyrecords.bandcamp.com
Psychic Pain: psychicpainrecords.com
Randale: randalerecords.de
Randy: randyrecords.bigcartel.com
Ratbite: myspace.com/ratbiterecords
Ratghost: ratghost.bandcamp.com
Rawmantic Disasters: rawmanticdisasters.blogspot.com
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Rusted Teeth: facebook.com/rustedteeth
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Thrilling Living: thrillingliving.com
TKO: tkorecords.blogspot.com
Une Vie Pour Rien?: uvpr.fr
Up the Punx: upthepunxrecords.bandcamp.com
La Vida Es Un Mus: lavidaesunmus.com
Vision of Warning: visionofwarning@gmail.com
Wallride: wallriderecords.com
What's For Breakfast: wfbrecords.com
World Gone Mad: worldgonemad.bigcartel.com

DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(BP) Ben Paulsen
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JR) Jason Ryan
(KS) Kenn Suto
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MD) Michael DeToffoli
(ML) Mike Leslie
(RS) Ramy Silyan
(WN) Robert Collins

ANINOKO – San Francisco's ANINOKO deliver six tracks of pissed and political hardcore punk in Tagalog. The relentless and blistering pace barely gives you enough time to realize what's happening before the song is almost over. The ferocity and speed of this tape reminds of WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?, LOS CRUDOS, and DS-13, and at some moments the breakneck speed of the start / stop parts seems influenced by RIPCORD. Singer Rupert delivers his screams and lyrics in an urgent and furious manner that is hard to forget. The intensity and energy of their live shows definitely carries over to this recording. Hardcore done in the way that I best appreciate it: political, pissed, fast, and to the point. Check them out! (BP) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, aninoko.bandcamp.com)

ARMY – *Pre-Demo* – "Pre-Demo" is an appropriate title—this feels like half of an A-side. It's a really quick explosion of heavy hitting hardcore with a lo-fi force. The whole thing is recorded in one breath, with feedback providing the only gaps between songs. Think of it as a boots-on-the-ground assault that moves along fast enough that adrenaline will be the only thing to help you keep up. They don't over-explain anything and keep it nice and direct, so their point is always bare-faced and hits its target. After listening I was wondering out loud if I wanted more, but honestly it's kind of perfectly precise the way it is. I really respect bands that leave people wanting more from a perfectly-timed condensed set. That's the mark of well-spoken band, and this is a well-spoken tape. (MD) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, no contact info included)

BAYWITCH – *Hellaspawn* – A very true-to-form surf recording with a charmingly hand-polka-dotted cassette shell and other signs that a lot of care and intention went into putting this together. The vocals are velvety-smooth and the production is convincingly anachronistic. There is also a slight undercurrent of creepiness, but if nobody told you, you might not notice it. There are even a few purely instrumental tracks, keeping in line with surf convention. You probably already know if you like surf music, and if you do, you definitely want to check this out! (HB) (9-track cassette, lyrics included, baywitch.bandcamp.com)

BIDET – *Raw Ass-Cleaning Punk* – Four fast, blown-out drum and bass songs, with vocals that cut through just underneath the noise. Mixing wild ass D-beat that feels like a race to the end, and melodic anarcho-punk breakdowns that would even make Penny Rimbaud smile. This tape feels very chaotic, but comes across cohesive and very catchy. Lyrically super on point and very direct. Very interested to keep up with this band and see the places they go. I would also be remiss if I didn't say that the bassists tone and technique make me wonder "why even bother with guitarists?" (RS) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, bidetpunx.bandcamp.com)

BIG HEET – *Yellow Badge* – Noisy, driving, weirdness with far-away distorted vocals that remind me of the early '00s. Unusual guitar solos repeat until they seem normal. There's a lot going on. Multiple elements executed with precision combine to create a sense of chaos. It's fast like hardcore but unorthodox like FUGAZI, with maybe a pinch of rock'n'roll thrown in. It's hard to know what the songs will do next. Includes a pretty sick cover of the NERVES' song "Paper Doll," which is a cool sounding song but also has lyrics that are questionable at best. (HB) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, bigheet.bandcamp.com)

BIG LEAGUE – Jesus, I haven't heard a band this intense, this fast, and this tight in so long! Extremely consistent, angry, and heavy hardcore from Austin. Crisp bursts of 30-second explosions that are so fast you'll be swept up, but are so solid you'll be cradled. They're exactly what I'm looking for in a straightedge band: opinionated, focused, unbelievably tight, calculated and to the point hardcore that'll sober you up right quick. There's something in the water down there. (MD) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, bigxleague.bandcamp.com)

BLOODY HEAD – *Failed Experiments in Kindness* – Boy, oh boy...Slow, tense dirges from Nottingham with trashy and noisy guitars and a dude barking over it. Over half an hour of that. Tightly played and a few hypnotizing riffs but hella boring. (MA) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, bloodyhead.bandcamp.com)

BLUEHEALER – *This Was Your Life* – Repetitive and monotonous drum and bass parts, melodic tempo changes into different movements of the songs, angular guitar work, and three voices. One voice is frantic, one shouted / screamed, and the other sung low and deep. Six very manic songs that coalesce into very driving emotional post-hardcore. This record would fit perfectly next to all of your FUGAZI, ANTIOCH ARROW, and FOUR HUNDRED YEARS LPs. I very much appreciate the musical stylings of this band and I hope they get the exposure they deserve! (RS) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, thebluehealer.bandcamp.com)

BODY MEAT – *Several Heads* – BODY MEAT plays avant-garde punk that incorporates melody, off-tempo beats, angular guitar playing, samples, and moments of groove. Moments of repetitive rhythm and melody will then get shaken off by abrupt tempo changes. The more pop-influenced and straightforward songs remind me of LOS MICROWAVES, while the tempo change and experimental elements seem to be influenced by No Wave artists like TEENAGE JESUS AND THE JERKS. Given my interests, this was a hard one to pin down, which I appreciate. Art for the punks? (BP) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, bodymeat.bandcamp.com)

BONEHEAD – *Finally Punk* – BONEHEAD plays lo-fi punk with elements of garage rock and pop. Songs like "Back on Top" and "Baby on Repeat" create a dreamy atmosphere with mesmerizing, memorable vocal and guitar melodies mixed with a stripped-down rhythm section. In these fuzzed-out melodic moments I am reminded of SHOP

ASSISTANTS, ANOTHER SUNNY DAY, and DEAR MARJE. In the more up-tempo songs, like “Crystals On” and “Gone Girl,” the approach and style of the lo-fi and more driving punk elements bring DEAD MOON to mind. Throughout the thirteen tracks many different styles and tempos kept me guessing and intrigued. To be fair, I might not be very well versed in the bands that influence BONEHEAD but all I can say is, goddamn, I love the vocal and guitar melodies on this tape! If you’re in the mood for fuzzed out, dreamy, lo-fi punk, do yourself a favor and check this out. (BP) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, crasslipsrecords.bandcamp.com)

THE CARRY BOOTS – *Street Life* – French (language) Swiss (Canadian) left-wing street punk. The guitars are too metal for the steady uptempo bouncy pogo punk, but otherwise this is solid clenched fist Oi! with an early RANCID vibe. Wholly inoffensive even at the lowest points, while moments like “Téte Á Batte” are legitimately killer. (WN) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, 2358 Rue Lariviére, Montréal, Quebec, H2K 1R2 CANADA)

CEREAL BANER – *Oatmeal Outburst / Porridge Parley* – CEREAL BANTER reminded me a little of LIGHTNING BOLT, but with way looser songs and a lot of filler mushed in. This band is instrumental, noisy, avant-garde rock that slides closer to metal at times. They *love* to linger on a chord. Straight up, I walked out of the room while this tape was playing and came back and everything coming out of the stereo was exactly the same. The tape drones on at times, and I wanted it to be over way before it was. The second side was slightly better than the first, but overall I was left upset that I had to listen to something that felt like people were stoned and horsing around with the record button on. If you’re into experimental noise stuff, maybe you’d like this. I don’t, I just wanted it to stop. (KS) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, cerealbanter.bandcamp.com)

COMPUTER – *How the Neobrutalists Won the West* – Noisy, intense grindcore with alternating talking and growling vocalists. The song structures are mathy and complex, but there is still a solid groove that punches through. A thick swirl of art spirals through this cup of strong grindcore. One reference that seems appropriate is MELT BANANA. The lyrics balance searing, unapologetic social criticism and obscenity. COMPUTER is made out of a combination of old things but sounds new. They also reveal the truth of the infamous punk whodunnit, WHO KILLED SPIKEY JACKET? The suspense is killing you. (HB) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, c0mputer.bandcamp.com)

DEODORANT – Very DIY recording of a band that could be described as ‘80s style hardcore along the lines of REAGAN YOUTH, but also intermittently wanders into more funky territory not totally dissimilar to where the MINUTEMEN dared to venture. There are some raging guitar solos with a distinct twang on the tone, and moments where the whole band gets extremely sophisticated in a way that you can’t quite tell what intense drugs they’re on but you’re pretty sure this music is the product of an altered state of mind. Rhyming, impressionistic lyrics explore a variety of topics including barfing, cooking, hating cops, and gentrification. Raw, dirty and weird! (HB) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, deodorant1.bandcamp.com)

DEODORANT – DEODORANT’s demo has the speed, and for lack of a better comparison, much of the austere musical aesthetic of a BLACK FLAG-esque band for much of this tape, though they willfully swerve into some oddball DEAD KENNEDYS wackiness at times. I wanted to like it more, especially after reading the lyrics of “Blue Deaths Matter,” but the extra fuzzy vocals and lack of a real point of arrival in any of their songs left me wishing not for more, but just that the band arrived at where they seemed to be trying to go. Overall, I give it a “meh” and move on in life. I hope they work out the kinks though—there’s potential here. (KS) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, deodorant1.bandcamp.com)

DON’T FRONT – *Consequence To Exist* – If you are looking for something that doesn’t push the musical or mental boundaries of hardcore, look no further. I know that where we sit in this particular moment in creative history that everything has already been done, and that nothing is new but I didn’t realize that when I picked up this tape I would be transported back to the worst parts of the ’00s. The lyrics are riddled with half-written metaphors that come across like your local jock trying to express themselves, but masculinity has bound them to “clenched fists,” self-deprecation, and standing united. They do have that one song that is anti-cop, but again it is 2017 and if you aren’t staunchly anti-police by now...I could be wrong, but the Champion hoodie bootleg logo they made for themselves leads me to believe that these dudes are totally self-aware and know that 2005 is over. I do have to say the reverbed drum trigger at 1:01 on the song “Blue” sounds great. (RS) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, dontfront.bandcamp.com)

DREAM PROBE – *Demo II* – Fast and hard hitting hardcore punk that’s not so straightforward. The songs have a repetition to them that is broken up by oddly placed angular drum fills that throw off the songs in a really great way. Don’t worry—this tape comes complete with all your favorite hardcore four-on-the-floor tom breakdowns and I love that, but I also love that that’s not what makes this tape special. The delivery of the front-person’s vocals, and multi-dimensional bass lines is what drew me in, but I definitely stayed for the attack-y guitars and unforgiving drums. Every song picks up where the last one left off, equally pissed and just as complex. (RS) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, dreamprobe.bandcamp.com)

EARLY DISCLAIMERS – *NYC EP* – This Gainesville, Florida group’s tape released on Let’s Pretend Records showcases four down-tempo, introspective tracks. A strong country influence is betrayed by the twangy guitar tone and undercurrent of abject tragedy. The singer has a voice that’s a little weird, kind of like Kurt Cobain or Fred Cole; it adds character. Overall the sound is slow, emotional, and at times pretty heavy. (HB) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, earlydisclaimers.bandcamp.com)

ENEMY ONE – *Demo 2016* – Austin hardcore that really pounds it into you, especially with their rabid repeating chant lyrics. This tape only has two speeds: “fast” and “faster.” They give you a moment to brood and reflect while still keeping your heart rate floored and then ramp back up to a blitz level of aggressive stamina. This was an intense tape to get through for me because they really pack those eight minutes with a profound level of prophecy about those in your surroundings who will hunt you while you’re struggling to keep yourself afloat. Afterward it felt like walking away from a fight, where your adrenaline is up and you’re happy that you stood your ground, but you still feel dark after experiencing the person that you become when you hurt someone. It’s worth a listen, but be careful. (MD) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, no contact info included)

FUTURE STORMS – *Every Fucking Verse Sounds A Lot Like Giving Up* – If I had heard this tape by Oakland’s FUTURE STORMS without hearing *Not Coming Home* (also reviewed in this issue) I would likely be a little more dismissive. The mix on this tape is pretty off-sounding—the vocals sound like a guy kind of yelling off to the side in a room while some flat guitar sound is happening nearby. The songs are okay—very WIRE influenced—but could use more differentiation from each other. It’s like the same song again and again, with the same grip of riffs and drum beats. Shake it up y’all! Overall pretty ho-hum, but the potential seems to be there. (KS) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, futurestorms.bandcamp.com)

FUTURE STORMS – *Not Coming Home* –

Of the two FUTURE STORMS tapes I heard this month, I like this one better. It's got some real sick, raw energy and the music has an almost urgent note to the driving guitars and pounding drums. The music feels desperate in a compelling way. This band has a heavy WIRE influence, and at times I felt like I was getting a WIRE riff on loop. It's stripped down but heavy stuff. I'm hopeful for where these folks will go 'cause they've got some solid stuff here. (KS) (6-songs, lyrics not included, futurestorms.bandcamp.com)

THE GLOBS – *Do You Feel Weird?* – I can best describe this tape from Sacramento's the GLOBS as if MARTHA was really into MEATLOAF, but still wanted to play pop punk. There's ridiculously sweet and slippery pop punk guitar and keyboard hooks and dueling vocals. I want to hate it because it's really polished, practiced, and prepared. The lyrics seem to want to be serious or reflective, but kind of float away in a "we keep it a little bit sloppy seeming but we are on point" breeze with the music. This is the kind of "pop" punk you could safely play for little children and they'd probably freak the hell out with excitement. It's got some IRON CHIC or RVIVR worthy "whoa-a-whoa-whoa" moments and a few piano slides to boot. The tape leaves a bubble gum taste in my mouth, and I'm ashamed to play it front of my friends, but I think I like it. (KS) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, globsfromoutterspace.bandcamp.com)

HEADWINDS – *Cruel World* – I want to call this surf pop because of the calming sunset-by-the-sand feeling that I get in my heart when I hear it, but it also has an aggressive down strumming heartbeat at its core. I was lucky enough to see them when they came to play a house party in SF, and that night I saw them as a super loud and aggressive noise punk band. Hearing what they sound like stripped down in my headphones really shows the range that this band has. It's such a good tape because it has a serene presence, but still rides on a wave of insistent adrenaline. It's the same ways that JESUS AND MARY CHAIN have punk in their veins but still create a calming demeanor. I've literally been putting this tape on both to help me fall asleep at night and wake up the next morning. (MD) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, dontlookdownrecords.bandcamp.com)

JUANA BARRAZA – *Degradación Humana* – Gritty punk in the same tradition of (and sharing at least one member, likely more from) other Mexico City bands like TERCER MUNDO, MUERTE, CREMALLERAS, INSERVIBLES, and MUJERCITOS. Their sound is marked by constant dual vocal attack and bursts of speed throughout a solid, mostly mid-tempo assault. Named after a former pro-wrestling serial killer—yikes! Great stuff, but surely the best is yet to come. (MA) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, juanabarraza.bandcamp.com)

KERETIK – *Terra Mater* – Absolutely killer dark and moody crust, bringing to mind early NEUROSIS and AMEBIX. A massive production highlights the band's power, and the simplicity of songs like "Must We Suffer?" is welcome—just churning punishment on repeat. A stellar release that deserves more than a cassette shell and a blurb in the demo section. (WN) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, overkill@hotmail.com, ramekuukkeli.nettisivu.org)

LAW OF THE NIGHT – *Interaction* – Harsh noise with elements of primitive black metal, power electronics, anarcho-punk and doom. Was there a band (or project) who already sounded like BONE AWL, MODERN LOVERS, TOM WAITS, DISCLOSE, and SUTEKH HEXEN? Professional packaging printed on an iridescent insert. Completely hypnotic and highly recommended. (JR) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, (720) 663-8575)

MELANIN – *Not Your Target* – Melodic guitars, drums that hit hard on every two and four, and lyrics that cut so deep and direct. Extremely catchy. The front person wails in their beautifully deep voice about Black rage, destroying white supremacy, dismantling the prison industrial complex, and abolishing the police. The pain and rage can be heard so clearly by the delivery of the vocals because they are sung so clearly that you don't even need the lyric sheet. Musically this record feels very nostalgic to me, as the first bands that I thought of were the MISFITS and YOUTH BRIGADE, but the ideas and message of band are so much more complex that it almost feels wrong to compare them to such an obsolete sound. The B-side of this tape includes an exclusive mash up that is only on the tape, or available from the digital download. (RS) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, melaninpunk@gmail.com)

MENTIRA – This demo kicks my ass. Kansas City's MENTIRA deliver six tracks of driving, menacing hardcore layered with reverbed, agonized vocals. A great blend of pummeling mid-tempo parts that then break into chaotic, fist-pumping, D-beat riffs. At some moments I am reminded of INVASION and in other moments, IMPALERS and SACRED SHOCK. "Seres Despreciables" showcases their songwriting and keeps this demo interesting. The song kicks in with frantic D-beat and transitions mid-way into a dark, slower, dissonant part which seems to capture the different elements that MENTIRA has woven into this demo. I have also heard this band is killer live. Check out this tape! (BP) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, mentira1.bandcamp.com)

MERCURY TALES – *Dimanche Violence* – Pounding hardcore drums meet post-punk-driven melody, with vocals that are loudly sung, sometimes screamed, but also feel like they are directly spoken to the listener. Physical copies from the band come with a dope zine that includes artwork and lyrics for each track. The song "Pretty Legs" definitely catches the unrelentless delivery of front person Doris. Entrusting you with emotional outpour line for line about dominant culture and the objectification of femme bodies with lines like "go out as if I'm going to war." The dark, blown-out feel of this release reminds a lot of SHOPPERS from Syracuse, New York in all the right ways. (RS) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, mercurytales.bandcamp.com)

MONSTER SQUAD – *Demo #1* – Yeah. That MONSTER SQUAD. The one from Vacaville, California. Before you saw them sharing the stage with CASUALTIES and A GLOBAL THREAT, they were just a crew of snot nosed teenagers cranking out enthusiastic, if somewhat pedestrian, fast hardcore punk. These recently unearthed tracks come from '97 or '98 (their liner notes, man, I just read them) and feature MONSTER SQUAD at their rawest and most primitive. Often sounding like a bedroom boom box project, this shit lacks almost any fidelity whatsoever, but that's kinda the point (and, honestly, the charm). (WN) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, entukara.bigcartel.com)

NEUTRALS – *Promotional Cassette 2* – It's funny, Allan gave me a copy of *Promotional Cassette* quite some time ago, but it got misplaced (it happens) and then rediscovered in a move recently, and I listened for the first time just yesterday. It's good, that first *Promotional Cassette*, but I confess that I dig these songs even more. The droning monotony of "Motorcycle Cop" with the constant high end jangle of Allan's guitar will have even the most rigid punks swaying, and following it with the uptempo burner "Private Museums" was a brilliant move. Vocals are half spoken and kinda monotone while remaining innocent and casually earnest. Comparisons abound, but NEUTRALS come off like a band who *like* certain things (like WIRE, perhaps), instead of a band trying to sound like something they are not. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, neutrals.bandcamp.com)

NEW CROSS – This demo kicks in with a stompy, mid paced '80s Boston-style intro and doesn't let up from there. Stripped down, pissed hardcore punk in the vein of LAST RIGHTS, NEGATIVE FX, and NEGATIVE APPROACH. No frills and straight to the point. My personal favorite is "Fake Smile," which is catchy, memorable, and angry as hell. (BP) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, xnthompsox@gmail.com)

NO SUN – *Warm* – There's a wave of recent bands that are keeping the shoegaze sound alive while recognizing the punk structure that is the basis, and this SLC punk band has accomplished just that. NO SUN embodies the simplicity and the emotional output of punk and washes it out to make storied and soul-touching music. They stand comfortably alongside DIIV or NOTHING by making well-structured melodic riffs and drenching them in an intelligent atmospheric drone. I invite any hardcore kids to give this a chance; I think it'll strike an internal chord that's personal enough to find a common ground. (MD) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, nosunband.bandcamp.com)

ODD – ODD plays melodic and somber punk that is catchy as hell. I really appreciate how this band creates a dark ambiance without falling into the trappings of recycling run-of-the-mill post-punk / goth elements. The somber and dark ambiance is complemented well by thoughtful and catchy moments of melody—bands like NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and BURNING KITCHEN come to mind. In songs such as the "Witches of the State," the sparse, dissonant and melodic guitar work reminds me of fellow Montreal punkers COMPLICATIONS. Looking forward to hearing more from ODD! (BP) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, oddpank.bandcamp.com)

OKI MOKI – *Ocean Breeze* – First off, OKI MOKI have awesome cover art: neon pink on warm card stock, and it's of a dark cat perched on a huge human skull. Or perhaps the cat is the size of a mouse? Anyway, OKI MOKI play an easy-going brand of happy-go-lucky party rock that reminds me of BLACK LIPS or ARIEL PINK singing after a dentist appointment. The CRYSTAL CASTLES band portrait is charmingly contrived, but they don't sound like they care. Jangly dreamscapes that wake up with you crashing through the guardrail, flung off a cliff by vocals that are driving me a bit crazy. (JR) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, okimoki.bandcamp.com)

OND CIRKEL – *Sist Av Allt* – Dark and mid-tempo post-punk from I shit you not: Gothenburg, Sweden. Female vocalist, with clear Swedish lyrics. Driving composition, with guitars that are not very overdriven or chorus-pedaled out. The drums are disco-y at times, tribal during certain parts, and the use of the hi-hat is pretty nice. The translation of the name is "Vicious Circle." The cover of the tape features a cool drawing of a rat in a wreath of sticks. (ML) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, ondcirkel.bandcamp.com)

ORDER – This demo just grabs you from the opening and gets you moving around the room. Simple, driving guitar riffs and drum beats just hammering at you again and again, with strong, clear yelling of solid lines like "*if there is a god / I spit on you in hell.*" The song structure feels stripped down in a lo-fi way I love and fits with the simple black cassette insert with just the name and the band symbol on it. I kept playing this one again and again, soaking it in. ORDER just brings it on direct, in a manner that reminded me of SURRENDER and HEALERS a little, but with a rough throat vocal style that felt a little like PISSED JEANS. I really hope this band puts out a full-length, 'cause I'm all about it. (KS) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, theundesirable.bandcamp.com)

PERSONA – Dark, mid-tempo, driving punk from Sweden with a hint of rock'n'roll influence. The guitar tone is fuzzed out like BLACK SABBATH while creeping, plodding chord progressions invoke RUDIMENTARY PENI-like sense of utter hopelessness and disgust. A few of the tracks go in a much more straightforward punk direction that kind of sounds like UK82 style punk, with melodic bass lines that accent strained, rhythmic talk-singing. Includes a bonus noise / feedback solo. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, persona@speedmail.se)

RABIES – *What You Know About Me* – This tape opens with a threatening, aggressive track, "Rabid," and then bounces back and forth between dark, brooding singer-songwriter territory and straight up indie pop. Maybe it's just been a long weekend of drinking too much, but some of these tracks are so pretty and so damn sad that I almost can't handle it. There's a couple on here that could be the soundtrack for a tragic, nostalgic breakup montage in an '80s movie. One track, "Pointless," sounds like a cousin of one PAT BENETAR's dramatic slow jams. The singer and guitarist behind this project, Rachel Fry, has an incredibly beautiful voice and skill. I'm no A&R expert, but it wouldn't surprise me if these folks end up famous. (HB) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, rabieshfx.bandcamp.com)

THE REAL COST – *III* – Three hardcore songs in three minutes that are riff-focused enough to fall under a groove-metal spell. Their scowling vocals slosh along, lurching like that split second when you feel a fist hit your teeth. It's concise enough to be a strong rant about life falling apart, but with riffs that'll make it easy to get invested so it feels complete. It pushed me to a limit, but made it easy and satisfying to sit down and listen to. (MD) (3-song cassette, lyrics included, therealcost.bandcamp.com)

RUIN BY DESIGN – *Familiar Surroundings Of Shattered Pieces* – Energetic melodic punk with razorsharp teeth that sometimes hide the hooks in a way that reels you in before you even realize that you're jamming to a catchy chorus. It's fast, but the vocals have a (contrived?) snarl that hinders my enjoyment at times, but that's a matter of personal taste. Can easily see this sound getting honed in and streamlined for the punk club circuit, and they would likely be head and shoulders above their peers. (WN) (4-song CD-R, lyrics included, ruinbydesign.bandcamp.com)

SISTEMA EN DECADENCIA – This demo contains six blasts of blistering, distorted, raw and chaotic punk. I appreciate how relentless this demo is without any break from the speed, intensity and noise of SISTEMA EN DECADENCIA. This shit is no joke! Given the sheer noise attack, ATROCIOUS MADNESS comes to mind and for the more driving, D-beat elements, MAQUINA MUERTA seems to be a fair comparison. As well, the vocals are urgent and fucking brutal which only adds to the intensity. If you like your hardcore distorted and chaotic as hell, check out this demo! (BP) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 4490records.bandcamp.com)

SLEEPING BAG – *Demos of the Deep* – Lo-fi indie music, with tastes of BEAT HAPPENING, PEDRO THE LION, and a little bit of PAVEMENT. Discordant at times, and with hard to discern vocals on all the tracks. Lyrics about loneliness, the ever present staying / going issue, and desire. Lines like "everyone is everyone" (repeated again and again) struggle through a swamp of sound towards trying to be poignant but fall down deep in the shallows. It's some jangly, pocket change-y type of walking music but even though my head nodded after a few replays I felt like this was the kind of thing I could only appreciate in a very certain, very "I'm writing slapstick indie songs about life and relationships" sort of period of life. That period is long past, so this tape fell very short with me. (KS) (10-song cassette, lyrics not included, sleepingbagband@gmail.com)

SPECK – *Speck 1* – Noisy psychedelic rock that is mostly instrumental with the exception of occasional unintelligible vocals that sound like a reflection of a sound wave through a series of glass chambers within a large, deep cave. There's probably crystals and geodes and stuff in there rather than bats and spiders. Pushing boundaries only in the sense of potentially taking someone's acid trip to a peaceful, soothing place and then dragging it back out to a terribly uncomfortable, scary place. (HB) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, speck58.bandcamp.com)

THE SWELL – The recording quality leaves something to be desired, but the songwriting is interesting and sounds like the SCREAMERS trapped in a well. Is that why it is called SWELL? That was not intentional, and I don't believe whatever happened when this band got together was either. Experimental bouncy-house punk recorded underwater. Don't get me wrong; I'm thoroughly perplexed and bizarrely provoked. This band is from London and that is apparently all they would like you to know about them. (JR) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, theswellpunx.bandcamp.com)

THE TOMS – *Introducing...The Toms* – Endearingly sincere, self-deprecating, gentle power pop from this trio of dudes named Tom. The tape was recorded by another dude allegedly named Tom. The songs really get under your skin like a sweeter, less douchey version of WEEZER, with infectious guitar leads and vocal melodies in the tradition of SUPERCHUNK. (HB) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, whoarethetoms.bandcamp.com)

TRASH KNIFE – Major-key garage hardcore with uncompromising melodies that have a way of looping back around, so that a 60-second song will bounce back again and again with a kind of sloppy sense of urgency. It's as if they're stumbling over themselves and so amped that the song itself is in front of them and they're clambering after it, excited for the chase. All this with such clever lyrics, shouted with a lot of personality. This tape is funny in a "shit, this is what the world is *actually* like" kind of way. Best song on the tape is "Kill Your Selfie," which is a perfect anthem against Generation Lookatme! (MD) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, trashknife.bandcamp.com)

UNRELIABLE NARRATOR – Very straight up punk from Pittsburgh, PA, including standard guitar riff / vocal combos and a sloshy fun feel. Head-nodding stuff, but the vocals are too washed out to really get the full experience. I would equate the recording quality with the experience of watching a TV show that is just the image of another TV show within it (TVs in TVs man, can you dig?). But hey, it's a demo, so I don't expect the homework to be turned in crisp and folded! I will look out for a full-length from these punks, and I bet they get a good pit going live. (KS) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, unreliablenarratorpunk@gmail.com)

VITTNA – Bloodcurdling hardcore punk from North Carolina. Sharp and angular riffs with drums completely brutalizing through six songs. Parts SEPTIC DEATH, ZERO HOUR, PINK TURDS IN SPACE, SACRILEGE, FAFF BEY. The vocalist sounds like they are being exorcised with the strength of ten wolves. Dire lyrical themes. The tape is packaged with a piece of vellum with the logo printed, while underneath is a matte finish image of grim death. VITTNA is Swedish for "Witness" and the lyrics are sung in both languages. There are only 100, and you must get one. This is a must have hardcore punk tape release from 2017. That is all. Death to us all. (JR) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, no contact info included)

WARSICK – *Surrounded By Death* – This Canadian band narrowly escapes the predictable trappings of their name. They've got some of the Mötor-elements of INEPSY and the thick and pounding production of AVSKUM, without totally relying on the D-beat template (well…most of the time). The vocals randomly remind me of CHRIST ON A CRUTCH but drenched in reverb, of course. Think '00s Profane Existence and Skuld releases. If any of this sounds good to you, or if you're still recovering from the last Värning Fest, WARSICK shall not disappoint. (MA) (12-song cassette, lyrics not included, warsick.bandcamp.com)

WET BLANKETS – WET BLANKETS plays snotty, lo-fi garage punk in the vein of the URINALS and the REATARDS. This tape is a compilation of all their demos and 7"s. In the more upbeat and melodic moments I could also see REDD KROSS as an influence. The songs and recording quality are simple and stripped down in a very genuine way. Some of the later songs are faster and steer away from the garage punk elements. "TV Suicide" and "5 Seconds to Nil" are catchy and definitely had me tapping my foot and bobbing my head. Given the order of the songs on this tape, it's really cool to see the progression that WET BLANKETS has made over time. I'm curious to see what comes next. (BP) (15-song cassette, lyrics not included, gonewiththeweed.bandcamp.com)

WITE WASH – *Demo '15* – Emotionally abusive and aggressively dark, sludgy hardcore. Rhythmic enough to beat its way into your veins with the same mean-spiritedness of FLIPPER or *In My Head*-era BLACK FLAG. It'll linger and fester with absolutely nasty reverbed vocals; a nagging voice in the back of your head reminding you that one day you will die, and so will your parents and your pets, and in the grand scope of the universe your life is irrelevant. Songs about suicide, death, and a pointless existence. The whole thing dissolves during the last song into a defeated muck as it limps across the finish line, just like your dreams and self-worth. I actually love bands with an ethos like this. We need more people in this generation acknowledging the bleak world that we've inherited. It's healthy. (MD) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, witewash.bandcamp.com)

XVICOX – *La Necessita Della Ricerca* – '90s-leaning hardcore punk from Italy with thoughtful lyrical content (according to translations in this package). Emotive and melodic hardcore, a lil bit of fastcore, and even some skate punk sounding stuff—i.e. not trendy, which is cool. The tunes are short and to the point, typically avoiding traditional verse / chorus structures, reminding me of a less poppy BOOM BOOM KID. Comes off very sincere. (MA) (12-song cassette, lyrics included, xvicox.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *EXT001: Exhibition Compilation vol.1* – I went through a phase when I first got my driver's license where I would sneak out in the middle of the night and just drive in the fog with no one on the road, and I'd be swapping local bands' CDs after each song. *EXT001* has that reckless freedom to create the perfect linear soundtrack for each mile driven, when no one knows where you are and all four lanes on the freeway belong to you. It features a range of some bigger white whale names like MEET ME IN MONTAUK, REMO DRIVE, BABEWATCH, PITY PARTY, and also a fair amount of new bands. 34 songs in 90 minutes from literally all over the US, and a 20-plus page handmade zine with information and submissions about each band. What you'll find on *EXT001* is pure classic emotional skramz, brooding emotionally in-touch downtempo, intelligence-pushing jam punk, fist-pumping trad-punk / trad-core, freaky weirdo-punk à la TRADITIONAL FOOLS, dancefloor indie punk, introverted and confessional wash-punk, harsh spaz hardcore, thick avalanche doomcore, cracking and rupturing grindcore, groove-foused rawk'n'rumble, and a huge unstable hardcore noise-gasm to put it to bed. I love comps that focus on showcasing a variety of bands that would benefit from the exposure and get an opportunity to meet their now-fellow comp-mates, rather than hand picking bands that have a similar singular sound. Comps like these let the bands kind of dictate what the overall mood will be, and in this case it's eclectic and surprising. Keep a look out. (MD) (34-song cassette, lyrics not included, exhibitiontapes.bandcamp.com)

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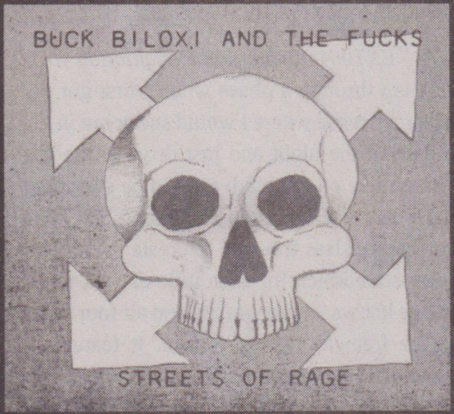
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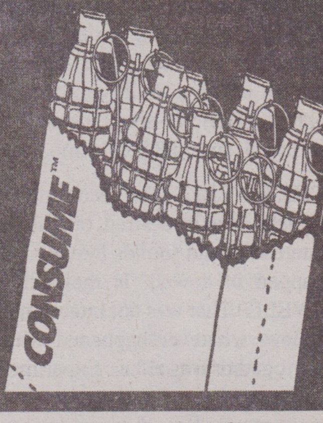

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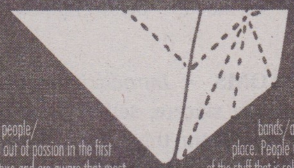

We like to meet people/bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

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CLOCK TOWER NINE #13
$3 / 28 pgs

This issue of *Clock Tower Nine* covers some varied territory. There is a bit on "What's the Last Record You Would Sell," a slice of a list of "1,000,000 Things Learned From Postcards," how to make prison pizza, and a long piece about a road trip with a friend many years ago. The zine feels kind of weak at first, but the road trip portion is good. There's an interesting anecdote about the door coming off a van in NYC, and there's good stuff about arriving somewhere for the first time, getting tired of Texas, and staying in contact with your friends—which led to my favorite quote: "a drunken phonecall translates to 'the world is shit and right now you are the one person who can understand why.'" I like that line a lot. I recommend this zine if you want to read a nice road trip story, with some other stuff surrounding it, and a nice cover on top of it all. (KS)

Danny % Spin Cycle, 321 Broadway, East Seattle, WA 98102

CIUDAD IMPROVISADA BATTALA INVISIBLE #1
30 pesos / 28 pgs

I'm barely fluent in Spanish, and I'm not mining this person's social media pages to figure out additional information to write this review, just reading the comic at face value. It's one of those comics like *GON* where you don't need to be fluent in another language to read it, since the comic itself is mostly visual and symbolic. Comics like this are interesting because they're universal. They use really fat lines and just do grayscale to add dimension. The content itself seems to be a wacky story where there's an imaginary universe where pencils and drawing / erasing seem to wield the untold power of creation and destruction. There's definitely some adult content, and this comic comes with an age warning, but it's not really overdone or offensive, just totally bizarre. Fools are erasing and drawing each other left and right and stabbing each other with pencils; there are a lot of weird monsters doing various things. The author also uses classic comic symbology to express basic emotions and ideas with pictures inside speech bubbles, some lettering (the sound effects are pretty universal even if they're in another language), and some motion lines. I don't know exactly what their trip is, but I've seen far worse comics. (MR)

urbano.o.matta@gmail.com / urbano-mata.tumblr.com / facebook.com/ciudad.improvisada

HYPNOSPIRAL COMICS #8
free / 12 pgs

Each one of these comics has a typed manifesto type thing on the inside jacket, and the rant this time really spoke to me. It's about how you have to learn how to divide your time when you have a job and are trying to make comics, and you have to go about it in a disciplined way to make it all happen. In any case, I think this guy is selling himself a little bit short if his stuff really is all free, because he is a skilled draftsman. It's a lot of bold lines and heavy blacks, not too much shading, hatching, or grayscale. However, the lines are crisp and the drawings are good, so it works. It's all random stuff he's dreamed up, or spoofs he does on popular fiction, etc. Each page you'll find something new in the three and one panel strips which are mostly comprised of gags that are pretty cynical and satirical, which I enjoy. (MR)

PO Box 54681, Philadelphia, PA 19148 / mjacobalvarez@gmail.com

EMERGENCY EXIT #2
free / 28 pgs

This is the ramblings of a drunken, depressed bicyclist, riding all throughout Europe on a lean wallet. Right up my alley, right? The author's achievement, the amount of miles, and the number of countries traveled through on bicycle are nothing short of amazing. What bothered me, though, was that their thoughts throughout the whole ordeal were mostly not too relevant grumbles about crumbling society which jerked from one passing thought to the next without rhyme or reason. Enter Poland and consider England's housing market! Pedal through Lithuania and ponder the death of the middle class! Scream through Latvia and just be depressed! The few chapters dedicated to the author's ride seemed to condense their time in, and a few times, their opinion of an entire country on a particular bike lane, the ease of a finding one single night's lodging, a song a bartender played late at night, or one busy intersection. No travel stories, eye opening realizations, drunken mistakes, hilarity, sadness, or anything at all, really. I recommend reading random chapters and digesting them fully, getting depressed and discussing this toilet earth with loved ones, rather than trying to read this front to back. (DZ)

punkrockbikeclub.com / bwread.blogspot.co.uk

IPSWICH UNDERGROUND #2–4
free / 28–40 pgs

What a strange little read! These zines are so cram packed with pro, local advertising, that it's almost hard to tell who it's geared towards. Sure, there's punk as fuck shit on the cover, but inside you get interviews with local sculptors, pro-wrestlers, the aging shoe cobbler, ads for plumbers, restaurants, upscale thrift shops, and a clothing store in the street mall. To be fair, though, there's also a killer punk photo page in each issue, rad punk ass band interviews, as well as interviews with local OG old metal dudes, graffiti artists, show listings, and even drunken opinions on the seemingly corrupt mayor. I actually really fucking liked this weird rag. It's so strange. It's like somebody snuck a bunch of cool punk stuff into a coupon book from a hotel. (DZ)

PO Box 401, Ipswich QLD, 4305, AUSTRALIA / aaron.borg@yahoo.com

NO QUARTER #8

22 pgs

No Quarter is a literary / theory review journal. This zine does okay with letting you know where the author got the books, giving links to pieces, and being accessible in that the reviews don't assume too much of the reader. The stuff that gets reviewed isn't even terrible! Reviews include Attentat, NC Piece Corps, a very important summary on the history of Black communities in Alberta, Canada and Oklahoma, United States at the turn of the century. Did you know that "Alberta is unique in that it is the only jurisdiction on record to have granted a charter to the KKK—making its activities legal, even though one of its stated objectives was racial purity?" Terrified? Me too! The review of the NC Piece Corps pamphlet (which later became a whole chapter in the book *Dixie Be Damned*), was also a great read. So much crucial historical information about the swamps of North Carolina circa 1700. Read up to learn about white anti-klan gangs, Black maroon communities, and indigenous rebels and defenders aligning together in arms against the fascism of the KKK and the police. The reviews tend to be lengthy, which is fine by me because they offer more information and substance compared to a short blurb. Not to mention who the fuck has the time to read when we're well into the depths of the apocalypse? The biggest complaint I have is that the first essay, allegedly about cybernetics, honestly made almost no goddamn sense to me. The ghosts of Deleuze and Guattari are gonna haunt the author. A smaller complaint I have is that the "theory" of the source texts is nearly entirely lost in translation in the reviews. It's one thing to be non-academic, and another to be intellectually immature. Seems like the authors are more on the immature side, but maybe I'm an under-stimulated brat who is dying to hear what total strangers think of obtuse ideas. I haven't read past issues so I'm also not sure of the extent / breadth of the content covered in these reviews. Maybe I'll skim #9 (if the meteor doesn't come before its publishing). (ED)

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OUR FUTURE #2

£1.50 / 24 pgs

The highwater mark for disappointing albums will always be *Grave New World* by Discharge, regarded as one of the worst albums ever made by a major punk artist, if not *the* worst. However, it is not without its fans. Rodney Shades from Thisclose (who is the most outspoken *Grave New World* apologist) focuses his energy on the extremely difficult task of rehabilitating *Grave New World*'s status in *Our Future*. In this zine, he dispels the myth that Discharge aimed to make a glam-metal album by providing historical context for the album in the broader British punk scene. The thoroughness of his argument should be applauded—included are excerpts from major music publications' reviews of *Grave New World*, reviews of contemporaneous albums by other British punk heavyweights (such as GBH and the Exploited), and most tellingly, interviews with *Grave New World* guitarist Stephen "Fish" Brooks as well as the tour manager for Discharge's infamously disastrous US tour in promotion of the album. As icing on the cake, Shades also discusses the influence the album has had on others (outside of his own band, of course) by providing information about covers of songs from the album as well as the Japanese supergroup Grave New World. This zine is so thorough and so interesting that I almost wanted to give *Grave New World* another spin. *Almost*. (JD)

ourfuturerecords.bandcamp.com

PLASTIC BOMB #99

€3.50 / 80 pgs

Where *Trust* gets all-too-frequently described as the German *MRR*, *Plastic Bomb* is the likely equivalent to the defunct *Punk Planet* or the surprisingly not defunct *Alternative Press*. If you have the slightest grasp on German, this will be a lot of fun for you, and everyone is a winner with the free CD of 25 songs from a smattering of German punk bands. (RH)

plastic-bomb.de

RAZORCAKE #99

$4 / 112 pgs

I learn something every time I read an issue of this magazine. I think that's really important. It's rare I pick up a copy here in the Bay, but even living in LA I was reluctant to invest time in the magazine. The typeface, art, and layout sometimes feel a little punk 101, while the articles themselves are full of good writing and good music. There are some seriously interesting columns in this issue: a meditation on building DIY communities through gardening; the lessons of observing Ramadan; a report on LA's homelessness crisis. There's an awesome in-depth interview with Oakland's Midnite Snaxxx and another with *Love & Rockets*' co-creator Jaime Hernandez, which comic lovers will enjoy. The actual comics in the magazine felt a little half-assed though. Overall, there is so much good material to work with and I think the people behind Razorcake should put energy into making a more focused aesthetic and voice for the magazine. (GJ)

PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA, 90042 / razorcake.org

RIOT 77 #19

€3 / 46 pgs

A black and white, glossy full-size mag coming out of Dublin talking about a variety of mostly older school but ongoing punk stuff. We got interviews with the Flamin Groovies, Richie Ramone, the Ruts DC, Johnny Moped, and a few more, not to mention reviews of books and music. I tend to scoff at these high gloss fanzines that focus on the bands of yore, but I really liked this one. The Flamin Groovies came off pretty interesting in their interview, but the insight on the Ramones I learned from Richie Ramone was worth the whole mag for me. A lot is packed in this publication, and the layout is very professional but still very enjoyable. A good fanzine for fans of late '70s, early '80s punk. (KS)

Cian Hynes, PO Box 11342, Dublin 2 Ireland

THE SECRET OF THE MOON'S ROTATION #2

14 pgs

This zine is decent in the sense that I was interested in at least flipping through the collages. This zine is also just fourteen pages of wingnut collages. I should have said that first. But it does those two things (be wingnutty, and be hella cut out pics from god knows what texts) in a fine way. I read this entire zine; it was disorienting, gave me a headache, and made me glimpse into the brain of some freak. I did appreciate that glimpse—the stream of consciousness, the parallels of ephemera, the all-day-at-the-library kind of feel. Here's some buzzwords from the content: mycology, trepanning, Rosicrucianism, bagpipes. Check it out, or don't. (ED)

captainmissionismycopilot@hotmail.com

STARDUMB MAGAZINE #8

€3 / 35 pgs

Stardumb Magazine is the music zine produced by Rotterdam's Stardumb Records, an independent label begun in 2000, focused on putting out European pop punk. I can't say it's my favorite genre, but the zine was a fun read, with a light tone and mostly funny banter. The interviews conducted with featured bands the Zatopeks and Lone Wolf are the most interesting, giving good insight into their opinions of European politics and culture, with quick-fire questions like "Johnny Cash or Johnny Rotten?" "Margaret Thatcher or Theresa May?" "Liam or Noel?" My only issue is that the Stardumb enterprise is steeped in an eerily male, Ramones-worshipping culture, having bizarre and bad

passion for bands like the Queers and Italy's Nerds. I love the Ramones but the type of worship here weirds me out. Stardumb seems to interpret lazy, faux-naive art as primal and chaotic. This interpretation will always bore me. However, the zine does a great job building a strong support for fans and members of the bands they love. (GJ)
PO Box 21145, 3001 AC Rotterdam, NETHERLANDS / stefan@stardumbrecords.com / stardumbrecords.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #148–149

$3.25 / 64 pgs

The Trouble With Normal is always a chill but fascinatingly detailed romp into what's going on in Columbia, MO (and nearby parts). This installment covers the summer, and we get reports on a number of local shows, the True / False Film Festival, an account of being a roadie for a band in 2002, a smattering of summer show memories, an interview with the Lawrence band Arc Flash, some reviews, and a piece on Trump and South African Apartheid. The writer, Boone, always gives you a lot of zine bang for your buck. I found the ending piece about South African Apartheid and whether similar situations could be created here in Trump's America to be an interesting comparison. While the argument has many holes, it does reinforce the undeniable overt racism that is coming from the White House. The interview with Arc Flash was kind of zany and fun, and the band came off as interesting, a little aloof, and hard working. I also very much appreciate the point of how the internet has created such a plethora of music available to us that it makes local music scenes even more important. Overall, a solid issue, and I enjoyed my visit to Boone's Columbia, MO. (KS)
PO Box 1444, Columbia, MO 65205

TRUST #183

€3 / 68 pgs

This issue of this long-running German punk zine has interviews with Larry Livermore (Lookout Records) and Reagan Youth (who still kill it live, seriously). As my German language ability is minimal, trying to interpret the record and zine reviews is a blast. Funnily enough, some of the only English in the whole magazine is reviewing *Maximum Rocknroll*. It's nice to read nice things. (RH)
Trust Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, GERMANY / trust-zine.de

TRUST #184

€3 / 68 pgs

Aside from the standard *Trust* fare we all know and love, there's also a nice big interview in this issue all about *Maximum Rocknroll* with content coordinator Grace Ambrose. Decide for yourself if the German translation is accurate. It's a fun game! Also, find out how she answers the age-old "NOFX or Bad Religion" question. The answer may shock you! (It won't.) (RH)
Trust Postfach 11 07 62, 28087 Bremen, GERMANY / trust-zine.de

WHEN LANGUAGE RUNS DRY #5

$4 / 52 pgs

This is a zine specifically for people with chronic pain and their allies. Chronic pain is pain that persists after a period of time where healing should have taken place. Issue #5 comes a decade after the zine was first conceived in 2007. This zine is a collection of poems, essays, comics, and interviews from contributors who are all suffering from chronic pain or family members of people experiencing chronic pain. This is one of those zines that you will read once, forget about, and unintentionally leave out in the open for you to discover again every seven years or so. (RH)
chronicpainzine@gmail.com / chronicpainzine.blogspot.com / nevertwice.etsy.com

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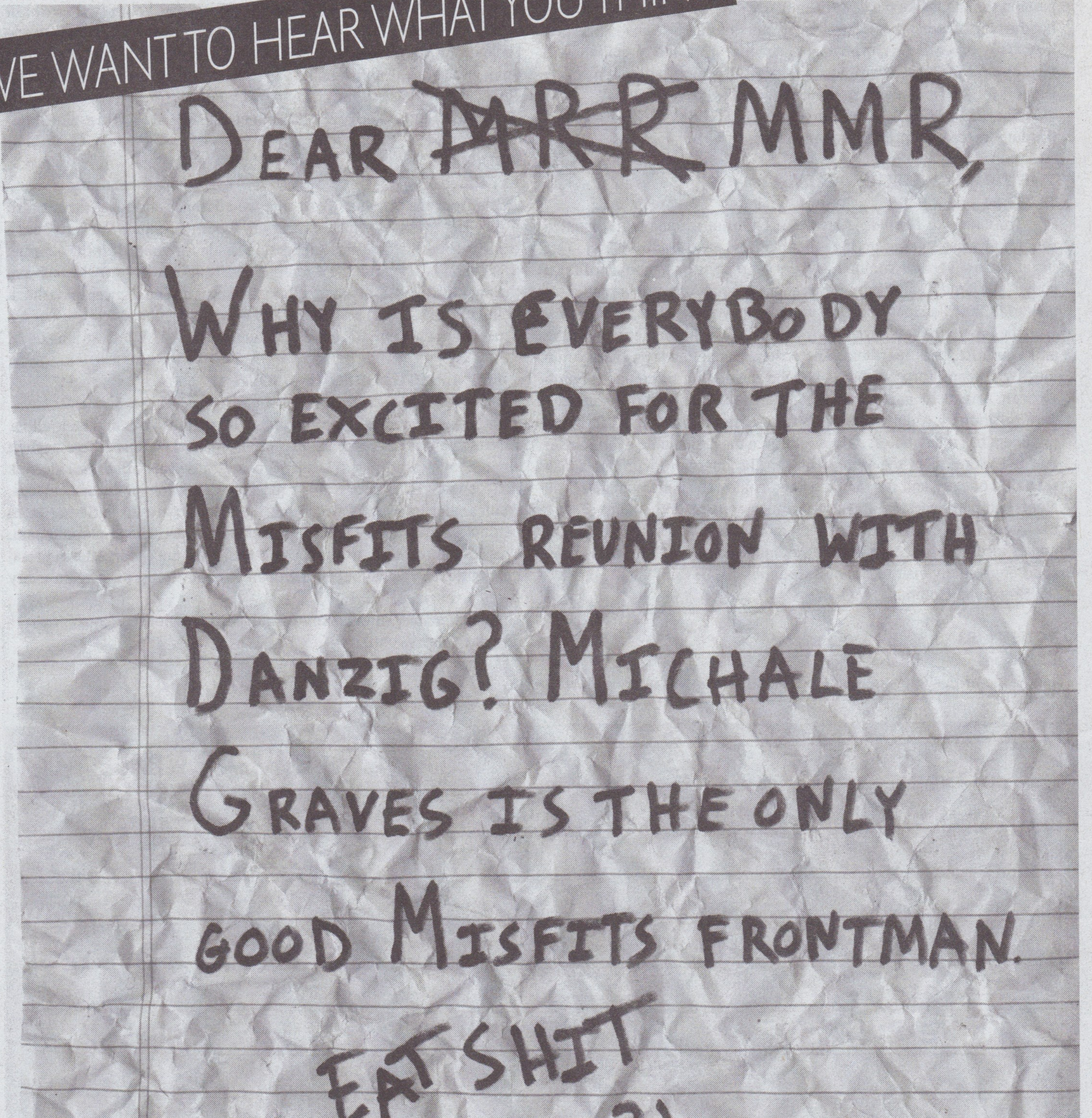

DEAR ~~MRR~~ MMR,

WHY IS EVERYBODY SO EXCITED FOR THE MISFITS REUNION WITH DANZIG? MICHALE GRAVES IS THE ONLY GOOD MISFITS FRONTMAN.

EAT SHIT

-CARL

...EVEN IF YOU ARE WRONG

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